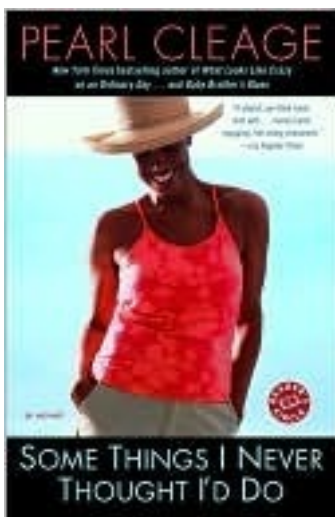

Pearl Cleage

Some Things I Never Thought I'd Do (West End #1)



Title: Some Things I Never Thought I'd Do (West End #1)

Author: Pearl Cleage

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Description

With the unique blend of truth and humor that made her first novel, *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day* . . . , a huge bestseller, Pearl Cleage returns with an extraordinary novel that is rich in character, steeped in sisterhood, and bursting with unexpected love . . . and maybe just a little magic.

Depending on the time of day, Regina Burns is a woman on the edge of a nervous breakdown or an overdue breakthrough. One shattered heart and six months of rehab have left her wary and shell-shocked—especially with the prospect of taking a temporary consulting job in Atlanta, a move that would allow Regina to rescue the family home that she borrowed against when she was “a stomp down dope fiend.” Her stone-faced banker has grudgingly agreed to give her sixty days to settle her debts or lose the house.

Returning to Atlanta is a big risk. Last time Regina was there, she lost track of who she was and what she wanted. There’s a lot of emotional baggage with her new employer, Beth Davis. Can she really forgive Beth for breaking up her wedding plans on New Year’s Eve because she just didn’t think Regina was good enough to marry her son?

Meanwhile, Regina’s visionary Aunt Abbie has told her to be on the lookout for a handsome stranger with “the ocean in his eyes” who has a bone to pick and a promise to keep. Then a blue-eyed brother appears on the streets of Afro-Atlanta wearing a black cashmere overcoat, flashing a dazzling smile, and lending a helping hand when Regina needs it most. But between falling for Blue Hamilton and dealing with Beth, secrets will emerge that will threaten to send her life twisting in surprising new directions.

Like a conversation with a good friend, *Some Things I Never Thought I’d Do* shares hope, love, and laughter. As always, it is Pearl Cleage’s unforgettable characters and her gift for dialogue that will earn this provocative new novel a place in the hearts of her growing family of readers.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Insightful reviews

Atena Oyadi: I was able to get pretty engaged with this story. I like the stories she has to tell - they are compelling. I think it's interesting that she starts the story talking about drug addiction as though it were merely a series of bad decisions, with few physical or psychological ramifications beyond the loss of cash and property. I think she treats the topic a little too lightly, and with a smidge of judgement.

I also take issue with the way she presents this "neighborhood cleansing," without much questioning of the morality of it. I know it's kind of a 'she's saying what we're all thinking' thing, but I don't think it's as simple as she presents it.

I guess that ultimately, I feel like if she made more of an effort, she could write great books of substance, as opposed to lightweight books that are really enjoyable. Not that there's anything wrong with that.

But still, I did enjoy it and kind of bonded with the characters. I'm reading *Babylon Sisters* now.

Lynecia: I really enjoyed this book--Pearl Cleage has a wonderful knack for heartwarming love stories and then sneaking in a little politics (lol). All in all, she's weaved a wonderful love story--one that has traveled through time--literally!

Delaney Diamond: This story is about Regina Burns and how she turned her life around after getting hooked on drugs and almost losing her mother's house. Cleage didn't dwell much on the drug abuse, but it was the reason that Regina found herself in the predicament she did. There are other themes as well, such as the role of men in society—whether their role is as protector or predator—and how they treat women and children.

Cleage also touches on how black men are perceived in society at large, and whether or not they can be deemed a good man even if they do things like have babies out of wedlock. Does that then negate every positive thing they've ever done? She poses this argument by showing the alarming lengths one woman went to in order to protect her dead son's legacy and his image as a "good black man."

The cast of characters was quite interesting. There were the neighbors, Aretha the photographer and Flora, who lived with her daughter in Atlanta while her DA husband fought the good fight in Detroit. They had to live in Atlanta because of threats from the people her husband was trying to put away. Peachy was a sweet, funny guy, and it was bittersweet reading about how much he loved his deceased wife. Then there was Blue, the dark-skinned, blue-eyed black man who had been traveling through time to find his soul mate, Regina. I have to admit, I thought the reincarnation bit was weird, but there was no denying the strength and sexiness of Blue and the fact that he and Regina belonged together.

Blue managed to offer protection to a small neighborhood on the west end of Atlanta. Utopia existed within its boundaries. Women could walk home at night without being concerned about their safety, there was a community garden, men tipped their hats with a smile and said good morning, and kids could walk home from school without fear of being harassed. If you had a problem and "the bad guys" encroached within the boundary and threatened one of the inhabitants, you just let Blue know and he'd have a talk with the perpetrator. If talking didn't work and they decided to act a fool again—or even worse, lay hands on somebody, the perpetrator might disappear. Most of the time he was a gentle guy, but it didn't pay to mess with anyone under his protection. Blue was like the Godfather for that neighborhood.

In real life, vigilantism can be problematic because there would be too many gray areas and people with absolute power tend to run amok. But in the movies and in books, I applaud it wholeheartedly, and besides, Blue understood his power and knew how to control it. He didn't just go knocking people off all willy-nilly.

One of the saddest parts of the book was when ShaRonda, only 12 years old, came home from a concert. She had thought her Uncle DooDoo would always protect her from the men in their neighborhood. (You know the ones. They prey on young girls. Unfortunately, her uncle was in deep with the worst of the lot, a man named King James who had a girl as young as *ten years old* turning tricks for him.)

When ShaRonda arrived home, the men made lewd comments and started passing money around to each other—even her SOB uncle—hinting at what was about to take place. She ran upstairs, locked the door, jumped from a second floor window, and ran to her friend's house—which happened to be in Blue's neighborhood.

Before that night, DooDoo and the gang made some foolish mistakes by encroaching into Blue's neighborhood, but what happened to this little girl was the proverbial last straw. Long story short, Blue handled it. After that night, folks within and without Blue's neighborhood no longer had to worry about DooDoo and his fellow criminals.

I like the idea of men who are gentle but also fierce warrior/protector-types. Yeah, it would be nice to have men like Blue around to protect the innocents, and do what the police can't.

The romance between Regina and Blue blossomed, and they ended up together. The book ended on a high note, for which I was happy.

Brittany: This ebook was once too ambitious. there have been too many topics and tales and hence the answer was once lackluster.

Tai: the tale used to be okay, yet I received bored while the narrator/main personality began conversing approximately their earlier lives...

Rebecca "BUTTER" Garrett: PEARL CLEAGE is simply a unprecedented AUTHOR...I LOVE HER type :)

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