

Never Say Never

Lisa Wingate

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It just goes to show, you should never say never. Amazin' things can happen in a regular life, if you let it.

So declares red-haired no-nonsense Donetta Bradford, a woman who embodies the friendly, hard-working nature of Daily, Texas, her hometown. Tired of watching life's adventures pass by the front window of her beauty salon, Donetta decides to celebrate her seventieth year by taking a cruise with her two best friends, Imogene and Lucy. As the women head out of town, Donetta is determined that Hurricane Glorietta won't change direction and head toward Perdida, their port of departure.

Perdida is also where twenty-something cruise line employee Kai Miller lives. At the very least, Perdida is the most stable home she has ever known. Making jewelry from polished stones and glass that wash up on shore, Kai is used to creating a job and a ragtag family wherever she might land. But as Glorietta threatens to come ashore, Kai must once again pack up her few personal possessions and, with her landlord's abandoned dogs in tow, join the mass exodus out of town.

Donetta and Kai, the book's two narrators, meet while fleeing the approaching hurricane. With both of their cars out of gas, the women prepare to face the storm's fury until members of the Holy Ghost Church rescue them unexpectedly. The group survives the night, and Donetta invites everyone to Daily to recuperate.

But not everything is wonderful back home. Snooty Betty Prine of the Daily Literary Society makes trouble for the busload of refugees; Donetta's husband is missing; and Kai is troubled by memories of her nomadic childhood. To further complicate matters, Donetta's handsome nephew Kemp Eldridge pulls at Kai's heartstrings, tempting her to maybe put down roots in the little Texas town.

With more than a dozen books under her belt, author Lisa Wingate does a good job of creating believable dialogue and appealing characters. At times, Donetta comes across as a bit too larger than life, but this is a minor distraction compared to Wingate's rich descriptions and warm portrayal of small-town life. While the plot's twists and turns are predictable, this third installment in Wingate's "Daily, Texas" series will satisfy the seasoned reader of Christian fiction while appealing to someone new to the genre.

This pleasant story isn't just about Donetta and Kai and the impact they have on one another's lives; it's about rediscovering love, finding the real meaning of home, and uncovering the deepest desires of the heart.

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