



## BOOK CLUB KIT

Dearest Book Club readers,

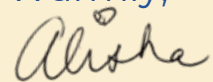
As a person who loves both reading books and talking about books in almost equal measure, please believe me when I say how grateful I am that you've picked up *Someone's Gotta Give* to suit both of those purposes. I know you are spoiled for choice with lots of great novels out there demanding a spot on your agenda; so truly, thank you for letting Lucia and her friends (and frenemies, and enemies) join you wherever you and your friends may be gathering.

I am a lifetime lover of funny, romantic, transporting, and juicy fiction, harkening back to my earliest days as a devout, slightly obsessed acolyte of the Baby-Sitters Club series. I loved reading about those girls who were like me, only also very different. That desire to see myself and my experience reflected in the books I read hasn't changed much. It's why Lucia is so very special to me, and why I brought so much of my world and experience into hers. I promise that this isn't a thinly veiled memoir - at least, that's what legal counsel has advised me to say - but I'd be lying if I said Lucia's thoughts, feelings, quandaries, and emotions didn't, in some small and big ways, mirror my own.

I hope you and your friends enjoy *Someone's Gotta Give*, and the weird, wild, and wonderful world of high-end philanthropy, super-posh London, and the hazy days of early motherhood.

Thank you for letting me into your book club just for this one brief and lovely moment.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alisha".

PS: If you, like Sooz and Lucia, fancy a bit of naughty romance, I just happen to have a copy of Tilly Willington's latest romp. Message me on Instagram (@alishafmiranda) and I'll speed that your way.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Balancing the demands of motherhood with career ambition is a challenge many women face when returning to work while their children are young, as Lucia does in the novel. Did that conflict resonate with you personally? Do you think it's truly possible to "do it all"?

2. Lucia wrestles with how to stay authentic in the face of judgment, whether it's her mother-in-law's passive-aggressive remarks or the pressure to straighten her hair for work. Where do you draw the line between "faking it till you make it" and just being yourself? Have you ever changed something about yourself, as a mom or a professional, to fit in? Was it worth it?

3. On the surface, Ollie is Lucia's cleft-chinned dream man—but what kind of husband is he, really? Were his expectations of Lucia ever hypocritical? Would you describe him as passive or active in his support of her choices, particularly around his family and friends?

4. Both Ollie and Lucia avoid conflict to protect their marriage. What do they risk by doing so?

5. As Lucia navigates the paradoxes of the philanthropy world, the novel raises a compelling question: What is the difference between meaning well and doing good? How do you view that distinction? And when it comes to the book's ultra-wealthy characters, did you find the author's portrayal more satirical or sympathetic?

6. Many characters in the novel reveal unexpected layers as the story unfolds. By the end of the book, how had your perception of Celeste and Melissa changed? And why? Did you relate to either of those characters in any way?

7. Lucia ultimately chooses to break company policy in pursuit of what she believes is right. Did you agree with her decision? When, if ever, is it necessary to bend the rules for a greater good?

8. Unlike Lucia, most of us could probably live without caramel Frappuccinos. But what food or drink from your hometown—or your family's table—would be impossible to leave behind, no matter where life took you?

# Q&A WITH

## ALISHA FERNANDEZ MIRANDA



### 1. How did writing a novel differ from writing a memoir?

I found writing a novel incredibly challenging but also, creatively, unbelievably freeing—and fun. When I read for pleasure, I mostly read fiction and love funny, romantic, transporting novels. So the task of writing something similar to what I like to read was daunting. Translating my voice onto the page, like I did for *My What If Year*, felt very natural to me, but letting someone else's voice exist in my head was much harder than I expected. At every point, I questioned my ability to actually do it, even after it was done.

At the same time, it was freeing to write about this professional world I know so intimately. I got to know my characters, especially Lucia, and I was able to lean into the fun, the joy, and the humor of the universe they occupy and reflect critically in a way I would never have been able to do in memoir. Fiction allowed me to play with these experiences in a creative way, untethered from the constraints of reality.

### 2. Stories that critically examine the lives of the ultra-wealthy have become increasingly popular in books and on television. How much of Lucia's world was influenced by your own experience advising companies and foundations on their philanthropy and social impact?

I started working in philanthropy in 2005, operating in different perspectives: a fundraiser; a donor; advisor to tiny nonprofits, huge foundations, royals, and celebs; and everything in between. So while “rich people behaving badly” is among my favorite genres of popular culture, I hope that *Someone's Gotta Give* offers a more nuanced look at this world.

In 20+ years in this field, I've learned that most people mean well, but that doesn't always translate to doing good, which is a big theme in this story. And one I wanted to explore through fiction, although I'd be lying if I said that many of Lucia's thoughts, opinions, and feelings weren't in some ways similar to my own. I have been to Buckingham Palace, watched horse racing in Ascot, and convinced many clients not to start their own nonprofits and instead fund another (great) organization or idea.

### 3. In this novel, you explore various types of complex relationship dynamics with Ollie, Sooz, Melissa, and even Tamsin. Lucia's close friendship with Sooz, for example, is tested by their differing views. How did you approach writing relationships in which the moral lines aren't always clear?

This is such a realistic thing about relationships, isn't it? Especially now, where it feels like the poles of what people believe and consider to be “right,” “moral,” or “good” seem like they're moving far away from each other.

Lucia is a bleeding heart and very empathetic, but she's also shrewd and practical. She cares about doing what she believes will do the most good. It was clear to her how to do that as a fundraiser, but at the bank, she has to navigate a new landscape that tests her moral center. Meanwhile, her closest friends, family, and co-workers want to have a positive impact on the world, but they all have dramatically different approaches. I needed them to be their own, fully realized characters while also reflecting back who Lucia had been and was becoming. A lot of the development that went into those relationships had to do with understanding the role each character played in relation to Lucia's own journey.

### 4. This novel grapples with what “doing the right thing” truly means. What is the difference between meaning well and doing good?

In my 20s, I advised a huge pharmaceutical company on setting up a corporate foundation. We spent months talking to people in their communities, researching the needs of their customers and employees. We crafted a thing of beauty that would help tens of thousands of women find community and access health care. It was, to this day, one of the pieces of work I loved the most.

After our engagement ended, I got an invitation in the mail inviting me to their foundation's launch event—instead of what we designed, they chose to build a walk-through model of the human colon and were inviting me to take a stroll through it in the middle of Grand Central. They wanted people to take the same journey through the colon as their poo does. That's what they spent on their money on, instead of what I had designed for them.

The philanthropy world is full of some of the most generous and well-meaning people I have ever met who have the power to do so much good, and often they do just that. But it's also an insane world. I believe that most people, including the makers of the supersize colon, mean well. But creating impact takes more than just a good heart. It takes partnership, listening to the people most affected by challenges, often putting ego aside, relying on smart people and solid advice, and so much more.

**5. You were born and raised in Miami, but you've now spent many years across the pond. How much of Lucia's experience as an expat and a mother reflects your own?**

Writing Lucia's London life, especially the beginning chapters of the book, required me to go back to my early motherhood days to remember what it felt like. My twins are now teenagers, so that was some serious mental time travel.

I have been an avid traveler since I was 18 and have lived abroad full-time since I was 26. Never in my life have I felt more like a fish out of water than during those early years of motherhood. Motherhood was for me the ultimate experience of getting out of your comfort zone.

I tried to convey some of those feelings in Lucia's story, but we had some key differences. When I moved to London full-time, I had already lived in the city before as a student, so I had a built-in network of friends. And by the time I had my children, I had already been an expat for years. And I did not have to marry into a British family.

**6. Lucia often tells her daughter, "Let's go do something great!" Does that mantra come from your own life? What advice would you give to readers who want to make a positive impact?**

While that moment between Lucia and her grandfather, and later between Lucia and her daughter Marley, is entirely fictional, I have had incredible role models in my life who constantly inspire me to think about how what I do each day helps others.

This book is dedicated to my parents. My mother is one of the most generous people I know, and my dad has shown me the value of constantly striving to do your best.

One thing I hope readers take away from this story is that you don't have to be a philanthropist—or a person who advises them—to make a positive impact. A simple act of kindness to a friend or stranger has more of an impact than most people realize. This novel is full of non-philanthropists and philanthropists alike who make the world better just by being thoughtful, kind people.

**7. Are you working on anything new?**

I've realized that I'm obsessed with stories about women of a certain age—my age!—balancing ambition and motherhood in all its beautiful, challenging, and comical forms. I'm working on a novel about a CEO and mother of teenage twins that gently pokes fun at the self-care and well-being industry, and also lets me explore a little bit of my love for speculative fiction!

**8. Do you prefer coffee or tea? Lucia loves her Starbucks, but where would you recommend readers get their caffeine fix in London?**

I deeply love coffee, but after almost 20 years in the UK, I do have a cup of tea a day, at around 3pm, with a little biscuit. The short answer to this question is Monmouth Coffee, a coffee so good that I get the beans delivered to me in Scotland by mail each month.

The slightly longer answer is that even though I'm very snobby about my coffee at this stage in my life, this little factoid about Lucia was a real flashback to my own early professional days in the UK when I was working at a bank. There was a Starbucks just down the street from my office, and I stopped in whenever I felt a little homesick for a caramel macchiato. It was a comfort for me, and I wanted it to be that for Lucia too.

**"A simple act of kindness to a friend or stranger has more of an impact than most people realize. "**



# SOOZ'S BRIT POP PLAYLIST



ABOUT YOU NOW – SUGABABES



WHOLE AGAIN – ATOMIC KITTEN



REWIND – CRAIG DAVID



BLEEDING LOVE – LEONA LEWIS



CAN'T SPEAK FRENCH – GIRLS ALOUD



B BOY BABY – MUTYA BUENA



FIGHT FOR THIS LOVE – CHERYL



BEAT OF MY DRUM – NICOLA ROBERTS



WANNABE – SPICE GIRLS



SCANDALOUS – MIS-TEEQ



MURDER ON THE DANCEFLOOR – SOPHIA ELLIS-BEXTOR



SUPERSTAR – JAMELIA



DIVE – OLIVIA DEAN

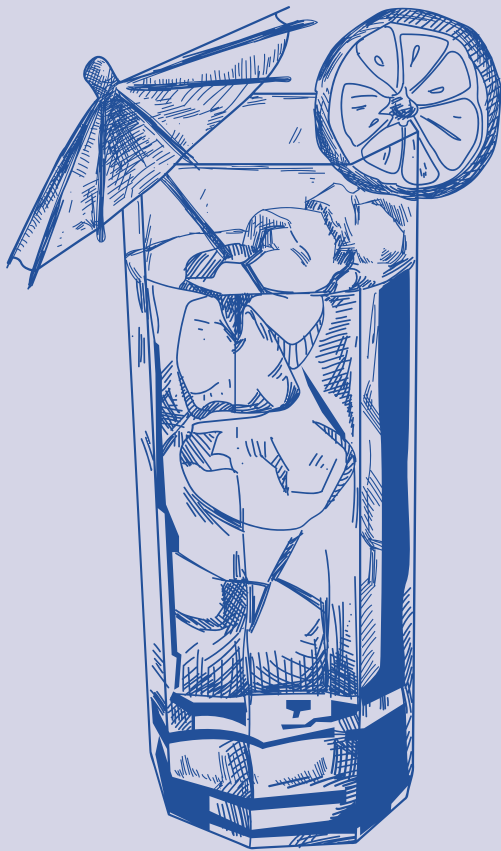


# LUCIA'S LONDON HOT SPOTS

- **The Hummingbird Bakery:** The best spot in Notting Hill for cake and cupcakes. They don't sell donuts, but when you try their icing, you won't miss them.
- **Monmouth Coffee:** Lucia is a Starbucks junkie but she hides it well. I think she wouldn't hate Monmouth (worth going out of your way for) where the sugar is sweet and plentiful.
- **Buckingham Palace:** Buckingham Palace is hard to miss. The old girl still looks great after all this time. Don't miss Green Park and St. James' Park on either side, both are worth a wander.
- **Waterloo Station:** Catch the train to Ascot from Waterloo Station — don't forget your hat!
- **Diana Memorial Playground:** Marley's favorite place to adventure and the location of Sooz and Lucia's meet cute!
- **Tower of London Dock:** If you squint into the light, you just might spot Tamsin's yacht moored right near where the Tudors liked to put heads on spikes.
- **Liverpool Street Station:** The Eastern Currents Office and its dangerous entry gates is right around here.
- **Portobello Road Market:** A hub of London's Caribbean community, the market is a rich, vibrant place to eat, wander, and shop, and it's conveniently close to Sooz's house.
- **Borough Market:** Too many delicious things to eat here, just one trip isn't enough! Try Brindisa for the broken eggs, the pork sandwich at the Black Pig, and a spot of dessert at the Humble Crumble.
- **Victoria & Albert Museum:** Relics of the Raj may be closed, but you can still find curiosities, art, and artifacts all over the V&A.

# THE SUNBLISS COCO-TAIL RECIPE:

A BALDONSHIEL FAMILY FAVORITE!



## INGREDIENTS

- 500 ml coconut cream
- 400 ml pineapple juice
- 50 g condensed milk
- The juice of half a lime, with another quarter for garnish
- 250 ml Bacardi
- Ice cubes
- Tiny pink umbrellas

*Add everything into a blender and mix until smooth. Garnish with a lime quarter, an umbrella, and a six-figure donation.*





## THANK YOU FOR READING!

If you selected *Someone's Gotta Give* for your book club, we would love to hear about it! Please tag us on social media:

**[@alishafmiranda](#) [@zibbypublishing](#)**

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paperback, e-book, and audiobook**

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