

TREASURE HUNTERS!

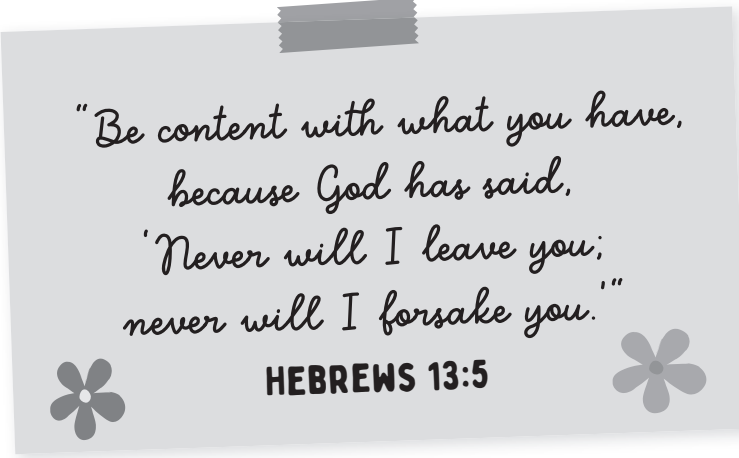
A Daniels Sisters Mystery



Chapter eight

— BLOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED —

WRITTEN BY JANEL RODRIGUEZ-FERRER



*"Be content with what you have,
because God has said,
'Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you.'"*

HEBREWS 13:5



– Chapter Eight –

BLOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED

After changing into a cozy pair of unicorn pajamas, I sat on the edge of my bed and thought back on what had happened just a few hours before.

Dinner with the Whitakers was always fun for us, but what made it extra fun this time was getting to finally meet and talk with Vita Majors. It had been a thrill to see such a glamorous television host in person instead of just on the TV screen. But even better than that was getting to find out what a woman of God she was. She loved Jesus and liked to spend alone time with God in prayer.

And ... I jumped up and did a quick happy dance on the rug at the foot of my bed—I was going to even spend more time with her tomorrow! I pumped my fists



in the air at the thought of it. Instead of going to school, I was going to accompany her to a retirement home and visit with the residents there. And not just any retirement home, but Silver Springs—the very retirement home where Miss Cynthia’s sister Belinda was staying!

Would I find the missing pearls there, too?

I was not only getting closer to finishing my assignment for school, but also to helping Miss Cynthia and solving the mystery, too!

I had so many things to feel happy about that I felt filled with energy. Energy I didn’t know what to do with—except dance!

I danced for about a minute, and even got to think up a new move to add to my gymnastics floor routine. But then, suddenly, my door flew open and my three sisters stepped inside my room, followed by Austin, the dog.

I stopped mid-dance and was left standing posed with both arms over my head and one leg sticking out. Since I thought it was funny (and I was still really happy about how everything was working out) I grinned at my sisters. To my surprise, the only one who smiled back was Austin, who wagged his tail and hopped onto my bed.



I slowly lowered my legs and arms and began petting Austin's head. "What's up?" I asked them as Austin panted happily.

"Oh, nothing," Lena said, folding her arms across her chest. "Just that we want to go with you and Vita to Silver Springs."

"It's not fair that only you get to go!" Kitty added. Cammie nodded. "You'll get to speak to Miss Belinda and maybe even solve the mystery without us!"

"You don't all need to be so angry about it," I pleaded. "I have to finish interviewing Vita for my paper. And since she's going to the home where Belinda is, I have to go there, too. It's like the perfect plan. I didn't leave you out on purpose. Why don't you all just ask Dad if you can come along?" My voice came out higher than usual with that last question. Although I was ashamed to admit it, I knew it was because part of me didn't really want my sisters to come along. I wanted to hang out with Vita by myself—at least for a bit. Helping her out at Silver Springs sounded like a cool way to do that, too.

"We just asked Dad," Lena told me. "He said he



didn't think it was a good idea. That Vita invited you as her special guest. And that since her TV show will be filming at the retirement home, too, the film company may not want all the extra people tagging along."

"Plus," Cammie said, as she sat down next to Austin and began petting his back, "he said maybe the retirement home wouldn't want extra kids to look after, either."

"And," Kitty said with a sigh, "Lena has a math test, and Cammie and I have a history test tomorrow, so Dad doesn't want us missing school."

"Oh," I said, not knowing what else to say.

"You're going to solve the mystery without us, I just know it!" Kitty looked like she might cry.

"You don't know that I will," I said (even though I was hoping to). "You don't even know that I'll actually get to meet Miss Belinda! And if I do, I don't know if she will even tell me what happened to the necklace! She might not even remember."

"I don't think she'd forget something so important to her and her sister. It's why they stopped talking to each other, isn't it?" Cammie pointed out.

"Yeah," Lena said. She walked over to my dress-

er and looked at all of us in the reflection of the mirror. “But I know what Ansley means. Sometimes when people get old, they have problems remembering things. Even things like the names of their children and other really important stuff you can’t imagine anyone forgetting.”



I felt my stomach flip flop. I did not like the idea of getting to actually find Miss Belinda but not getting to find out what happened to the necklace. I really hoped her memory was okay.

Kitty looked thoughtful. “Or, she could be kind of cranky like her sister. What if you ask her about the necklace and she doesn’t want to tell you anything?”

I felt my shoulders sag. That was another thing I didn’t want to happen if I found Miss Belinda.

Cammie threw her hands in the air. “Some old people sleep a lot, too. Especially if medication makes them sleepy, right?” she said. “What if Miss Belinda is



asleep the whole time you're there and you never get to speak to her?"

That was the last straw. "You guys! You make it sound like you don't want me to find her and speak to her. Like you'd be happy, even, if she forgot," I glared at Lena, "or refused to talk," I pointed at Kitty, "or was asleep the whole time!" I said to Cammie. Then I put my hands on my hips and frowned at them all at the same time. "You're all just jealous!"

That did it. We all started shouting at one another.

"How can you say that?!"

"I'm not jealous, you're just a show-off—!"

"That's not fair! You're not fair! None of this is fair!"

"You're so mean!"

Even though my sisters said they weren't jealous, I was sure they were, and my happy mood was completely ruined. "I'm glad none of you can come along!" I yelled out, just as Aunt Sam and Dad came into the room.

I clapped a hand over my mouth. Austin gave a little yelp and jumped off the bed.

"What's going on up here, ladies?" Dad said. "You know I don't like you raising your voices at one another."



My sisters and I all looked at each other in guilty silence for a few seconds. Then we all started complaining to him at the top of our voices.

“But Dad—! You don’t understand!” Lena began.

“You won’t believe what Ansley said!” Cammie told him.

“The girls are mad because I get to hang out with Vita and maybe meet Miss Belinda,” I interjected.

“It’s just that we’re all supposed to be detect—” Kitty started to say “detectives” when the rest of us stared at her with wide eyes and she stopped herself. The Daniels Sisters Detective Agency was still a secret.

“*What?*” Aunt Sam asked her with a puzzled look on her face.

“Heh,” Kitty laughed with a shrug.

Dad waved his arms over us, “Okay, girls, that’s enough! You keep this up and none of you will go with Vita to Silver Springs tomorrow.”

My sisters quieted down, but they looked like they were smiling a little. I narrowed my eyes at all of them. “But that’s what they want, Dad. They’re jealous that I get to go without them. I think they’d be happy if I



didn't get to go at all."

Dad looked searchingly at my sisters' faces. "Is that true?"

"No," Lena said. "Not exactly. We want her to go. We just want to be with her when she does."

"Yeah," Kitty and Cammie mumbled in embarrassed agreement.

Dad set his lips together in a firm line. "I see. Well, I already spoke to you girls about why it would be hard to have all of you go along. Especially since you have tests to take, and I don't want you skipping school and missing those."

"Even for something godly? Like helping old people?" Cammie asked.

"Yes," Dad said, "because you have responsibilities as children and students to do your best at school. Besides," his eyes twinkled at her, "being obedient to your father is godly, too."

"I guess," Cammie said, but she smiled back at him.

"And you, Lena," Dad said, putting an arm around her shoulders. "Didn't you get to have some special times by yourself—and with your mother—when you



got to act in the movie *Above the Waters*? And weren't your sisters a little jealous of you then too?"

"I forgot about that," Lena admitted.

"When we get opportunities to do really special things, like make a movie, or go away on trips, it sometimes happens that the rest of the family can't come along. But does that mean we shouldn't get to do them? Should we say 'no' to those opportunities?"

"Ansley needs to finish interviewing Vita for her paper. She also has an opportunity to show loving service to the treasures of our church—older people. And she might even get a chance to speak to Miss Belinda. Those are all very good reasons for her to go, even if the rest of you can't join her.

"So instead of being upset with her, why don't you help Ansley get ready for tomorrow instead?" Dad looked around at all of us.

"I've got an idea," Aunt Sam said, "why don't you all help Ansley and me make cinnamon rolls for the people at Silver Springs? That way you will be helping Ansley to bring love to them in spirit."

I felt myself light up inside. "It'll be kind of like I'm



bringing you all with me!”

“Okay,” my sisters agreed.

“And can we take some to school, too?” Kitty asked shyly.

“You bet,” Aunt Sam said, leading her out the door.

“Let’s start setting up.”

Austin followed Dad, Aunt Sam, Kitty, and Cammie out the door, his tail wagging. But Lena didn’t move from where she was standing.

I raised an eyebrow at her.

“I just wanted to say that I’m sorry, Ansley,” Lena said in a serious voice. “Dad was right. I got to do some special things when I filmed *Above the Waters*. I even got some alone time with Mom. I was very blessed. I shouldn’t have acted so jealous about this one day.”

“That’s okay. If I’m honest, I’m sure I would be jealous if one of you was getting to go to Silver Springs with Vita without me,” I said. “Especially if I *do* find Miss Belinda.”

Lena took a few steps to my closet and opened the door. “Have you decided what you’re wearing tomorrow?”

“No,” I said. “I guess I don’t have to wear my school

uniform. So I can wear something fun!”

“Let’s put something together.” Lena pulled a green blouse out of my closet and held it up to me. “This one brings out your eyes.”

The next morning, we all got up even earlier than usual. And it was cool, because my sisters helped me and Aunt Sam pack up the cinnamon rolls and muffins we made to bring to Silver Springs.

“I hope everyone likes them,” Kitty said as she helped to seal the lid over a plastic cake box. Last night was the first time she had made a whole tray of cinnamon rolls by herself.

“They look delicious,” I assured her. “I’m sure they’ll all be gone and in happy bellies before I get back.”

Aunt Sam nodded. “Because she cooked them with love. Food cooked with love always tastes best!”

Austin and Crepesuzette started barking at the window. Cammie pulled back the curtain and looked





outside. "Oh. There's a car here. Maybe to pick you and Aunt Sam up, Ansley."

"Oh, I'm not ready!" Aunt Sam said, struggling to untie her apron. "Oh, why does it always get harder to undo knots when you're in a hurry?"

"Let me help," Lena said.

Dad headed for the door. "I'll just let them know you'll be out soon," he said. And he pulled the door open just as Vita Majors, who was standing right outside, was about to ring the bell.

"Oh, hi!" Vita said. "I thought that instead of sending a car over, Ansley and Samantha might want to come along with me."

"That's very nice of you," Dad said. He stepped aside and gestured for her to come in. "They're not quite ready, yet, I'm afraid."

"I'm sorry I came too early," Vita said, looking a bit red in the face. "I can wait in the car. Please, take your time. It looks like you're still having breakfast." My sisters and I all hurried over to her and pulled her over to the kitchen.

"It's all right," Cammie said.



“Would you like some coffee?” Aunt Sam asked.

“And a cinnamon roll or a muffin?” I added. “We made a bunch to take with us to Silver Springs.” Kitty pried the lid off the box she had just sealed. “Please try one. I made them myself.”

The dogs barked and jumped around Vita as if they were welcoming her, too.

Vita laughed. “Okay, okay,” she said. “Thank you. I’d love to join you.” Then she pointed to her dress and my blouse. “Look! We’re both in green! Great minds think alike!”

Lena and I shared a secret smile. She’d helped me pick out the perfect outfit! Then I had an idea. “Since you’re here and it’s still early,” I said to Vita, “can I finish my interview with you?”

“Sure,” Vita said, accepting a cup of coffee from my dad. “But shouldn’t you write down my answers or something?”

“No!” Cammie shouted. When we all stared at her in alarm, she burst out laughing, “I mean, let’s film it. That way you can pretend to be a TV presenter, Ansley.”

“Oh! That’s a good idea!” Vita’s eyes sparkled.

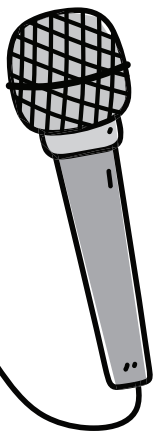
“That way you can practice and get a taste of what it’s like.”

“Okay,” I said, feeling a little shy again. “Let’s sit on two of these stools at the kitchen island.”

And after I had a little coaching from Vita, I gave Cammie my cell phone and the thumbs-up to begin filming us.

Vita nodded at me. I cleared my throat and said to the camera, “Today we are here with Vita Majors, the popular host of TV’s *Traveling Treasure Trunk Show*.” Holding up a spoon like a microphone, I turned to Vita and asked, “Tell me, Vita, what do you like best about being a television host?” And I directed the “microphone” towards her mouth just as she took a bite out of a cinnamon roll.

“Well, *mmfmmf*,” she said. And we all burst out laughing. Vita loudest of all. “I should know better than to take a bite out of something as I am being asked a question! But these are just so good!”





Kitty beamed.

After swallowing and sipping her coffee, Vita said, “My favorite part of my job is definitely meeting people. It’s the best part of what I do. I love getting to know and caring about new people. Since I travel so much and am away from my actual parents and sisters, it’s important for me to make friends wherever I go. Fans of the show are like one big family to me.”

“I guess that makes us like your friends and family, too,” I said.

“Oh, definitely,” Vita said, taking another bite of the cinnamon roll.

“But did you always want to travel like this? I mean, back when you were my age, what did you want to be when you grew up?”

Vita licked some of the icing off her lips and thought for a moment. “I always liked acting. But I guess when I was your age I thought I was going to grow up to be a wife and mother more than anything else. It just didn’t happen.”

“I guess it could still happen,” I said.

“Maybe,” Vita said. “But you know what I think? I think you should bloom where you are planted.”



“What does that mean?” I asked.

“It means God’s plans are better than our plans. He knows what is best and we have to trust Him. The way my life has worked out, I have gotten to see a lot of His creation. I get to love—and be loved by—a lot of people. I believe that no matter where I am, I am where God wants me to be. And I try to do whatever it is I believe He wants me to do. Right now, I am supposed to be this traveling television presenter. And I’ll do that as best as I can until God decides it’s time for me to stop.”

I almost dropped my spoon. “Wouldn’t it make you sad to stop?”

“Maybe a little. But I go wherever God leads me. When it’s time for me to do something else, I’ll feel it in my heart and move on.

“You see, Ansley, I don’t believe that people can be reduced to just one thing. You are never just an actress or a dancer or a cook or a teacher. We are all much, much more. We are God’s children. I obey Him because He’s my father and He knows what’s best for me.”

I glanced over at Dad who was tapping his watch.
“I think it’s time to go, ladies.”

“Whoops!” Vita jumped down off the stool.
“We don’t want to be late!” She nudged me. “For some reason, God is planting us over at Silver Springs today. So let’s try to bloom for Him.”

“Okay!” I grabbed a cake container and called out to my sisters, “See you guys, later!” Then I promised in a lower voice, “I’ll tell you guys *everything* when I get back!”



— MEET THE — **DANIELS SISTERS**

**THE DANIELS SISTERS ARE FICTIONAL, BUT DID YOU KNOW
THEY WERE INSPIRED BY FOUR VERY REAL SISTERS?**

We first met the Pitts Sisters (and their Daniels Sisters characters) in a series of books: ***Lena in the Spotlight***—three books featuring Alena Pitts' character, Lena Daniels, followed by Kaitlyn Pitts as Ansley Daniels in ***Ansley's Big Bake Off***, Camryn Pitts as Ashton Daniels in ***Ashton's Dancing Dream***, and Olivia Pitts as Amber Daniels in ***Amber's Song***.



Now that you've read this exciting new chapter,
don't forget to start this month's ***Reflections Journal***
as we dig into God's Word to learn more about the truths
the Daniels sisters are discovering!