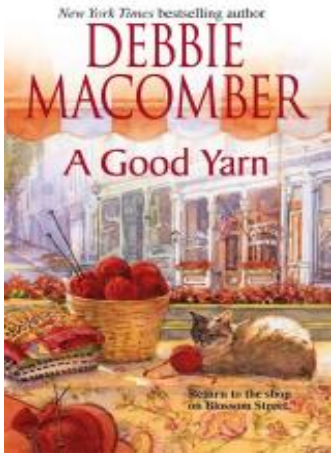
A Good Yarn

by Debbie Macomber



About the Book

You might have heard about a wonderful little yarn store in downtown Seattle. Debbie Macomber can take you there! Thousands of women discovered it when they read her bestselling novel **The Shop on Blossom Street**. Whether this is a return visit or your very first, you'll find that A Good Yarn is a place of welcome and warmth. A place where women feel at home. Where they're among friends, old and new.

The first person you'll meet is Lydia Hoffman, who owns the shop. In the year since it opened, A Good Yarn has thrived --- and so has Lydia. A lot of that is due to Brad Goetz. But when Brad's ex-wife reappears, Lydia is suddenly afraid to trust her newfound happiness.

Elise Beaumont, a retired librarian, joins one of Lydia's popular knitting classes. Since losing her life savings, Elise has been living with her daughter, Aurora --- the only positive legacy from her brief marriage to professional gambler Marvin "Maverick" Beaumont. Now she learns that her onetime husband plans to visit and that Aurora wants a relationship with her father, regardless of how Elise feels about him.

Bethanne Hamlin, like Elise, is facing the fallout from a divorce. But her husband, Grant, left her for another woman --- not a pack of cards --- and she's still struggling to reshape her life. She joins the knitting class at her children's urging; it's the first step in her effort to recover a sense of dignity and hope. Then she starts a small business *and* meets a man with whom she has something surprising in common!

Courtney Pulanski is a depressed and overweight teenager. She's staying with her grandmother, who's trying to help her...help that takes the form of dragging her to seniors' swim sessions --- and to the knitting class at A Good Yarn.

Like so many women, these four find companionship and comfort in each other and in this age-old craft. *Who would've thought that knitting socks could change your life?*

Discussion Guide

1. There has been a recent --- and growing --- resurgence of interest in knitting. Why do you think that is? What draws each of these characters --- Lydia, Bethanne, Elise and Courtney --- to the activity of knitting? Do you think there are reasons beyond the obvious ones they themselves give?

2. The shop, A Good Yarn, symbolizes Lydia's hope for --- and belief in --- the future after her triumph over cancer in **The Shop on Blossom Street**. It's now a successful business. Do you think the shop's meaning has changed?

3. All the characters in this book are coping with or recovering from some form of loss --- financial loss in Elise's case, the loss of a marriage in Bethanne's, the loss of her mother and absence of family in Courtney's. Even Lydia undergoes the loss (temporary though it turns out to be) of the man she loves --- and the beginning stages of losing her mother. What does each woman learn from these experiences? Does loss diminish them or make them stronger? Do their growing friendships --- and their knitting --- contribute to their ability to absorb and transcend their losses?

4. In your view, is there a particular significance to the fact that the women are knitting socks? Debbie Macomber has said that the socks are, in part, a reference to the old saying, "Walk a mile in my shoes," which suggests the importance of both compassion and tolerance. How is this relevant to the story? Are the socks themselves integral to A Good Yarn --- or could Lydia's class have been knitting anything?

5. Friendship, especially friendships among women, is an important theme in this author's stories. What role does knitting play in the forming of these friendships? Is there something special about knitting --- does it bring something unique to the relationships in the story that some other activity would not have? One of the quotes in the book, from Mary Colucci, suggests that "Knitters just naturally create communities of friends...." Do you agree?

6. According to another quote, this one from knitting designer Nancy Bush, "Making a sock by hand creates a connection to history...." In other words, knitting connects the knitter to the past. How? Is that a factor in this story? As Debbie Macomber has said, it's also about the importance of having faith in the future. Are these two beliefs mutually exclusive?

7. Another theme that plays a key role in Debbie Macomber's books is the concept of home and community. How important is that in this story --- and to the various characters? As well, it could be said that each of these characters becomes part of more than one new community. Do you agree that, for them, belonging to this small community of knitters is where it all starts?

8. Each character helps at least one of the others in some important way. For instance, Elise encourages and inspires Bethanne to start her own business, Courtney rescues Annie from a dangerous situation, Lydia gives Margaret money, and so on. The ultimate is Maverick's "Fairy Godfather." Do you think it's fair to say that the giver derives as much benefit and pleasure as the recipient? In what ways? Would you agree that these characters practice the "pay it forward" philosophy --- passing on whatever good has been done for them?

9. In Debbie Macomber's stories, there is often a balance between solving one's own problems and accepting the help and guidance of others. Do you find that to be true here? What is the relationship between the two?

10. The shop and the story are both called **A Good Yarn**. The knitting sessions are a chance for the women to tell their own stories and to listen to one another's --- to share their "yarns" in more ways than one. Do you feel knitting and storytelling share a natural connection?

Author Bio

Debbie Macomber is a renowned #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and one of today?s most cherished writers, with over 200 million copies of her books sold globally. Her novels beautifully depict meaningful relationships, celebrating family bonds and enduring friendships, and inspire readers with stories of connection and hope. Macomber?s works have collectively remained on the *New York Times* bestseller list for more than 1,000 weeks, with 15 titles reaching the top spot.

In addition to her captivating fiction, Macomber has authored bestselling cookbooks, adult coloring books, numerous inspirational and nonfiction titles, and beloved children?s books. Known as ?the official storyteller of Christmas,? her annual holiday tales are adored by fans, many of which have been adapted into original Hallmark Channel movies. She is also the author of the bestselling *Cedar Cove* series, which was adapted into the Hallmark Channel?s first dramatic scripted television series, enjoying a popular three-season run.

Debbie and her husband, Wayne, are dedicated parents, grandparents and recently great-grandparents. They reside in the Pacific Northwest --- the charming area that inspired many of her books.

Critical Praise

"Macomber's storytelling sometimes yields a tear, at other times a smile."

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