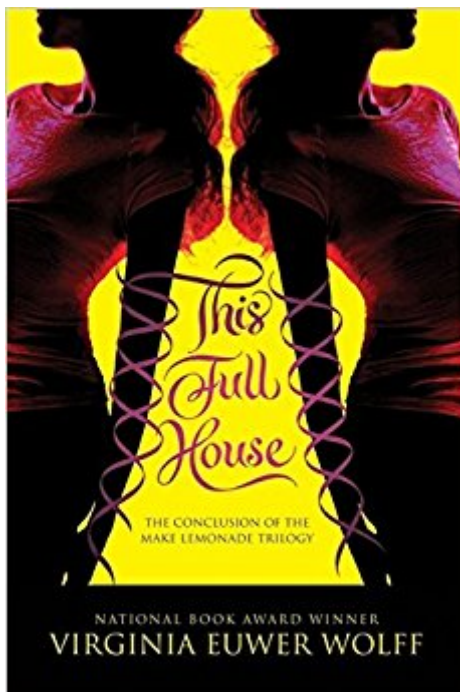


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This Full House



Synopsis

LaVaughn has made it through the projects, she's gotten over heartbreak, she's grown up, and now she might finally have her ticket to college. She believes that she's keeping alert to all possibilities. But discoveries she makes during her senior year in high school disturb everything in her small universe. And in an effort to bring together people who should love each other, she jeopardizes the one prize she has sought her whole life long. When do you know whether you're doing the right thing? What happens when you can't find a way to make lemonade out of lemons?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up • The third verse novel finds narrator LaVaughn in her senior year of high school. She is still determined to have a career in the sciences, despite the fact that her underfunded public school has run-down lab equipment, the teens in her neighborhood never consider higher education, and her subtle but persistent belief that those who succeed are somehow fundamentally better than she is. Characters from the previous books are reintroduced. Jolly, the young mother for whom LaVaughn has become a babysitter and near kin, is working on her GED and dating a man who seems willing to stick around. Annie, LaVaughn's hyperreligious childhood friend, has become pregnant by her hypocritical youth group leader. Awkward Patrick, with whom LaVaughn studied science during the summer, earns her jealousy by attending a new school with access to the university's state-of-the-art facilities. LaVaughn also faces a new challenge when she is accepted

into *Women in Medical Science*, a local hospital's rigorous after-school enrichment program for underprivileged girls. Wolff's language is rich and poetic, using scientific words like "tibia" and "deoxyriboneucleic acid" to both intellectual and aesthetic effect. LaVaughn's emotions, from fear to joy to disbelief, are palpable and realistic. The story falters a bit when a major plot contrivance strains credibility and diminishes what is otherwise an inspiring, relatable tale of perseverance, forgiveness, and family. --Megan Honig, New York Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this long-awaited sequel to *True Believer* (2001), winner of the National Book Award for Young People's Literature and a Michael L. Printz Honor Book, Wolff concludes her *Make Lemonade* trilogy. Now 17, LaVaughn continues to balance babysitting duties with school and her steadfast goal to get to college, away from the projects where she has grown up. After winning placement in a prestigious after-school science program, LaVaughn finds a new mentor in Dr. Moore, the program's founder. Studying exhaustively, she falls in love with science and plans a future in medicine, but she makes an astonishing discovery that threatens her future, her closest relationships, and her sense of self. The secret that anchors the plot is heavily contrived, a subplot about a pregnant teen (including a graphic birth scene) isn't always well integrated, and an authorial tone occasionally intrudes into LaVaughn's heartrending, free-verse narrative. As in the previous volumes, though, LaVaughn's ferocious determination and intelligence will wholly captivate readers, as will her beautifully articulated, elemental questions about integrity, faith, and how best to build a life. Grades 8-12. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The books of Virginia Euwer Wolff's trilogy (*Make Lemonade*, *True Believer*, and *This Full House*) follow LaVaughn through her teen years. LaVaughn, whose father has died before the first book opens, faces challenges of poverty and being raised by a single mom. All around her many people are falling prey to bad schools, teenage pregnancy, and many other dangers awaiting inner city (and these days probably many) kids. Her single mom supports her but, of course, has some challenges of her own. Her friends help her, too, at times, but sometimes they need more and demand more than she has to give. I found myself wanting to read just one more chapter, then just one more chapter, before I put the book down. The characters, situations, and writing are engrossing. Each of the first two books can be read and enjoyed by itself. The conclusion of the

trilogy, *This Full House*, however, is packed with surprises and will be enjoyed more if read after the first two. Without revealing too much, know that characters and situations from the first two books come back and are shown to be connected in ways I certainly never foresaw. LaVaughn's actions are true to the character and her age. Sometimes she means well but messes things up so thoroughly, there seems no reason for hope, but LaVaughn is not someone to sit quietly or give up, even if she has to pause, has to reflect, has to figure out what, if anything, her next step might be. This book and the first two in the trilogy are worth your time. The characters are interesting and human -- not superhuman achievers or less than human failures. You will find parts funny (such as the "Cross your legs for Jesus" chastity group), poignant (such as LaVaughn being so smitten with a beautiful boy she can scarcely breathe and think in his presence), and inspiring (such as her dedication to getting an education, despite the poverty and hardships around her). These books, written as a journal by LaVaughn, are quite an accomplishment.

This was a replacement book for my son's 7th grade teacher's in class library. The original was borrowed and never returned. It seems to be a popular book.

THIS FULL HOUSE is the conclusion to the *MAKE LEMONADE* trilogy by Virginia Euwer Wolff. It will be on store shelves in January of 2009. It has been fifteen years since the first book about LaVaughn and Jolly. Having just finished the Advanced Reader's Copy of *THIS FULL HOUSE*, I can say it was worth the wait. High school student LaVaughn and single mother Jolly first met in *MAKE LEMONADE*. LaVaughn reluctantly took on the job of babysitter to Jolly's two young children. Watching Jolly struggle as a single, teen mother makes LaVaughn realize the importance of getting an education and making something of herself. What followed was *TRUE BELIEVER* and even more experience watching and helping Jolly make ends meet for her little family. *THIS FULL HOUSE* provides a satisfying conclusion and a hopeful future for both LaVaughn and Jolly. An interest in science and medicine along with a determination to attend college gives LaVaughn the encouragement to apply for a program designed to give girls like her a unique opportunity. The program, WIMS - Women in Medical Science - is run by Dr. Moore. She has dedicated her life to medicine and wants to offer other girls the chance to thrive and succeed, as well. Every Tuesday and Wednesday, LaVaughn has the privilege of attending lectures and working in labs to study and learn the science that has always fascinated her. LaVaughn's life is filled with the WIMS classes, her own final high school classes, a job in the hospital laundry, watching Jolly's two kids while Jolly studies for her G.E.D., and juggling anything else that comes her way. With the encouragement of

those around her, LaVaughn is beginning to think college might actually be in her future. However, the constant desire to help her friend Jolly find the answers to her mysterious past are about to possibly derail the future she has fought so hard to plan. LaVaughn thinks she might have found the long-missing mother Jolly so desperately needs and wants in her life. Those readers who have yet to discover this remarkable trilogy should stop by the library or bookstore and get their hands on a copy of MAKE LEMONADE. Meeting LaVaughn and Jolly in that first book will bring readers back until they reach the conclusion in THIS FULL HOUSE. It was definitely a story worth waiting for. Reviewed by: Sally Kruger, aka "Readingjunky"

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