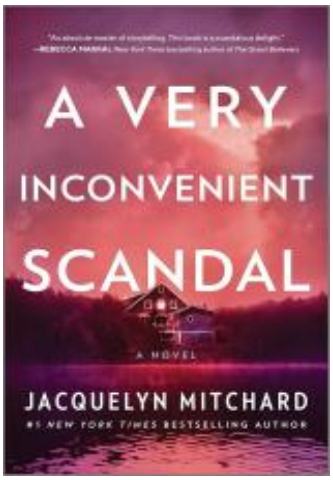
A Very Inconvenient Scandal

by Jacquelyn Mitchard



About the Book

From #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Jacquelyn Mitchard comes a page-turning family drama that explores the emotional consequences of loyalty, deception and jealousy.

Stunned by her recently widowed father?s reckless behavior, a young woman must learn to navigate a new world --- where the people she should trust the most have become strangers she cannot trust at all.

Frankie Attleboro returns home to Cape Cod with thrilling news. She?s met the love of her life, and they?re getting married with a baby on the way. That?s the moment her father makes his own jaw-dropping announcement: at 60, he?s getting married as well, to Frankie?s best friend, Ariel, who is also pregnant, and due soon.

As Frankie and Ariel struggle to adjust to their new relationship, Ariel?s estranged mother, Carlotta, returns after a decade-long absence. She claims to be a changed woman. But is she really? And where has she been all these years? Frankie is suspicious, and as Carlotta?s unpredictable behavior intensifies, Frankie must untangle the threads of the past to protect Ariel?s future --- and her own.

Discussion Guide

1. How would you feel if a family member --- parent, sibling, or even aunt or uncle --- were dating your childhood best friend?

2. Do you think there is always some competition involved when it comes to big life events? Is it possible to not compare one wedding to another, parenting styles, homes?

3. Frankie and Penn have a very clear bond. How do you think this story would have differed if she didn?t have him to

rely on?

4. And what about Ariel? Did Frankie take her friendship for granted while overlooking her very real need as a person and as a woman for companionship and love?

5. How early on did you begin to question Carlotta?s motive for returning? What tipped you off that her intentions were not totally what they seemed?

6. Why do you think Ariel was so accepting of Carlotta?s return?

7. What impact did the Cape Cod setting have on the story?

8. Could you see this being adapted as a film? Or a limited TV series? Whom would you cast as Frankie? As Ariel? As Mack? And especially, as Carlotta?

9. Essentially, A VERY INCONVENIENT SCANDAL is a novel about a family under siege. Do you think the worst trials that beset families --- excepting, of course, wars and crimes and natural disasters --- come from within the family itself or from outsider forces?

10. If you identify with one character more than the others, who is it? And why?

11. Was Frankie ?wrong? to feel as she did about Mack and Ariel? Was Ariel ?wrong? to have married her best friend?s father, especially after having been so close to Mack?s first wife, Beatrice?

12. Can a family ever really heal from a shock like the ones endured by the Attleboros in A VERY INCONVENIENT SCANDAL? What helps encourage healing in families? Can you think of an incident in your own family that you thought would never get resolved?

13. What role do the ghosts from the sea play in the narrative? What do they symbolize?

14. In a similar way, what does the red sea eagle mean to the characters in the story?

15. Is there always a path to understanding the hurt in the history of someone like Carlotta Puck? Does it matter, considering the things that they do?

16. People tend to think of Cape Cod as a summer paradise, but many of the big events in A VERY INCONVENIENT SCANDAL took place in the deep midwinter. Why do you think the author made that choice?

Author Bio

Jacquelyn Mitchard is the award-winning, *New York Times* bestselling author of 12 novels for adults, seven novels for teenagers, and five children?s books. These include THE DEEP END OF THE OCEAN, the inaugural selection of the

Oprah Winfrey Book Club. She is also a professor of creative writing whose short stories, articles, essays and book reviews have been widely published. A native of Chicago, she now lives on Cape Cod with her family.

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