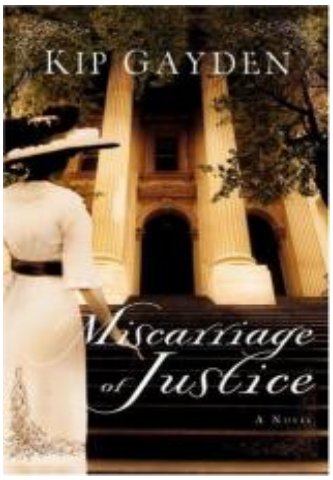
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Miscarriage of Justice

by Kip Gayden



About the Book

Anna Dotson is an icon female propriety --- the wife of a prominent doctor and city alderman, mother of two charming children, and member of the local ladies society. But inside her life is unsatisfying and lonely. Until she meets Charlie Cobb, a married man whose friendship and attention awaken the passion inside her. As the woman's suffrage movement marches on Washington, Anna will find herself drawn farther and farther from the role she is expected to play. And the consequences will be deadly.

Ripped from the headlines of the *Tennessean*, March 16, 1913, this is the true story of how Anna's betrayal led to a shocking public murder, and the killer's full confession to a local reporter. The only thing more surprising than the crime itself, is the verdict.

Discussion Guide

1. Did Walter miss subtle signs that his marriage was in trouble? What were some of the signals? Did Walter spend too much time with his outside interests and his overzealous dedication to his patients?

2. After Walter learned of Anna's affair with Charlie Cobb, do you think Walter began experiencing guilt over his lack of attentions that he paid to Anna? Was he more upset with himself or with with Anna? Charlie Cobb?

3. Did Walter overreact toward Anna after he learned of the affair? Did he overreact toward Charlie Cobb?

4. Bobby Dennis, Anna's brother, worshiped Anna and he totally blamed Charlie Cobb for the affair. Was Bobby correct in totally blaming Charlie Cobb without any blame placed to Anna? Is there a difference in the stigma of an affair for a women as opposed to a man in today's time period? Was there a difference in 1913?

5. Anna befriended Daisy Cobb, Charlie Cobb's wife. Which do you think is the greater betrayal, Anna's deception of Daisy or her betrayal of Walter?

6. Do you think Walter truly loved Anna? Do you think Anna truly loved Walter. Do you think their marriage would survive the scandal?

7. In 1913 women were not allowed to vote nor sit on juries. Do you think the verdict that was rendered in this case would have been different had the jury been composed of 12 women instead of 12 men? Do you think the defendant received a fair trial and a fair verdict? If you were on the jury what sentence would you have rendered?

8. Do you agree that the state was correct in demanding the death penalty? What do you think of the defendant's steadfast refusal to plead guilty to 2nd degree murder? Do you think the defendant acted without any co-conspirator or do you think there was other unseen hands in on the murder?

9. Temporary insanity was a legal defense to a murder charge. Do you think the defendant was temporarily insane when the murder was committed?

Author Bio

Hamilton "Kip" Gayden is a Nashville, Tennessee, 1st Circuit Court Judge. Gayden attended Vanderbilt for his undergraduate work and for Law School and has been a judge since 1974. He has written two novels and a biography of former Nashville mayor John M. Bass.

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Publication Date: February 12, 2008
Genres: Fiction, Historical Fiction
Hardcover: 336 pages
Publisher: Center Street
ISBN-10: 159995687X
ISBN-13: 9781599956879