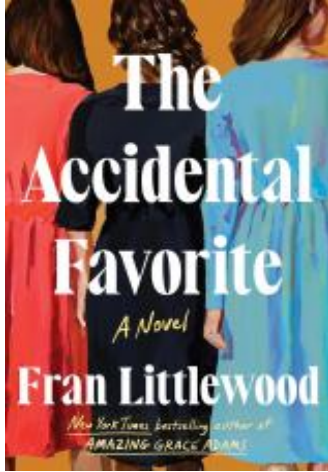


The Accidental Favorite

by Fran Littlewood



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *AMAZING GRACE ADAMS* comes a wryly resonant and deeply moving family dramedy investigating the question so many of us have asked ourselves: Do my parents have a favorite?

Vivienne and Patrick Fisher have done an excellent job raising their three daughters: Alex, Nancy and Eva. They're well-adjusted women with impressive careers, caring partners, exciting hobbies and sweet children. So it's with great anticipation that three generations of Fishers gather at a beautiful glass house in the English countryside for a weeklong celebration of Vivienne's 70th birthday. But when Patrick's reaction to a freak accident on the first day of the trip inadvertently reveals that he has a favorite daughter, no one is prepared for the shockwaves it sends through the family.

Decades-old unresolved sibling rivalries are suddenly unmasked. And be it newly uncovered smoking habits, ancient crushes, or private doubts about life decisions both big and small, no one's secrets are safe. Still-tender wounds are reopened amid an audience of friends, husbands, grandchildren and even coworkers, and as the family's past is re-written, they find themselves suddenly unmoored.

In a lively, poignant examination of memory, sisterhood and family ties, Fran Littlewood reminds us just why it is that people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Discussion Guide

Please Note: In order to provide book clubs with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal aspects of the story, as well as the ending. If you have not finished reading *THE ACCIDENTAL FAVORITE*, you may want to wait before reviewing this guide.

1. Which one of the siblings would you consider yourself most like? Most unlike?
2. The (often deleterious) effect of social media is a major theme of the novel. How does it affect the different characters? How do the effects vary from generation to generation?
3. The three Fisher girls are first introduced as types: sporty and assertive Eva; Nancy, "the troubled middle one"; and Alex, "the kind of woman who color-coordinates her wardrobe, who has been color-coordinating her wardrobe since the age of eleven." How does the novel complicate these initial judgments? How does it reinforce them?
4. How did your impression of each sister change throughout the novel? Did you find that your favorite, or the one you related to most, changed?
5. The sisters frequently define themselves against each other and sort themselves into roles. If you have siblings, do you do the same? Do you think of yourself as having particular traits compared to your siblings, or to other members of your family?
6. The rotating narration ensures that we get very different perspectives on the same events (as exemplified by their differing recollections of Christmas Eve in 1982). Who do you consider to be the most trustworthy narrator? Why? Do your memories of certain events differ drastically from those of others who were there?
7. As depicted in the novel, family gatherings are frequently sources of both joy and tension. Have you ever experienced a family get together like the one in the novel?
8. At different points Alex, Vivian and Eva all question whether or not they should stay with their respective husbands. Do you think each makes the right choice? Why or why not?
9. We see the sisters interact with both their parents and their children. Do you think their different experiences growing up with Vivian and Patrick determines how they treat their own kids? How?
10. Both Alex and Nancy experience similar feelings and fantasies about a man other than the one they married. This situation works out well for Nancy, but not for Alex. Why do you think that is? What differences in their situations might explain it?

Author Bio

Fran Littlewood is the author of *THE ACCIDENTAL FAVORITE* and *AMAZING GRACE ADAMS*, which was an instant *New York Times* bestseller and a #ReadWithJenna Book Club Pick. She has an MA in creative writing from Royal Holloway, University of London. Before her MA, she worked as a journalist, including a stint at the *Times*. She lives in London with her husband and their three daughters.

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