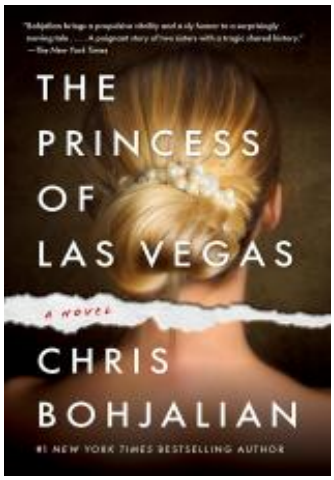
The Princess of Las Vegas

by Chris Bohjalian



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of THE FLIGHT ATTENDANT and THE LIONESS, a Princess Diana impersonator and her estranged sister find themselves drawn into a dangerous game of money and murder in this twisting tale of organized crime, cryptocurrency and family secrets on the Las Vegas strip.

Crissy Dowling has created a world that suits her perfectly. She passes her days by the pool in a private cabana, she splurges on ice cream but never gains an ounce, and each evening she transforms into a Princess, performing her musical cabaret inspired by the life of the late Diana Spencer.

Some might find her strange or even delusional, an American speaking with a British accent, hair feathered into a style 30 years old, living and working in a casino that has become a dated trash heap. On top of that, Crissy?s daily diet of Adderall and Valium leaves her more than a little tipsy, her Senator boyfriend has gone back to his wife, and her entire career rests on resembling a dead woman. And yet, fans see her for the gifted chameleon she is, showering her with gifts, letters and standing ovations night after night.

But when Crissy?s sister, Betsy, arrives in town with a new boyfriend and a teenage daughter, and when Richie Morley, the owner of the Buckingham Palace Casino, is savagely murdered, Crissy?s carefully constructed kingdom comes crashing down all around her.

A riveting tale of identity, obsession, fintech and high-tech mobsters, THE PRINCESS OF LAS VEGAS is an addictive, wildly original thriller from one of our most extraordinary storytellers.

Discussion Guide

1. There?s a lot of talk about chance in the novel. To what extent has chance played a part in Crissy?s and Betsy?s lives,

and to what extent have their choices driven them to this point?

2. Has a bad choice you?ve made led to something good? Or has a good choice --- as the British would say --- gone to pot?

3. Why do you think Crissy finds it easy to let down her guard in a public performance but so difficult to do the same in her personal life?

4. On page 12, Crissy scoffs at the trope of the ?unreliable narrator,? saying all narrators in fiction are unreliable. Can that also be applied to us in real life and the stories we tell ourselves and others?

5. The novel explores the public?s obsession with the royals. Apart from Chrissy?s uncanny resemblance, what else do you think draws her to Princess Diana?s persona, both public and private? Can you relate at all to celebrity fixations?

6. In addition to their mother?s death, what other issues do you think are at the root of Crissy and Betsy?s estrangement? In what ways did their paths in life diverge? In what ways are they coming together?

7. On page 80, the senator quotes Princess Diana: ?I lead from the heart. Not the head.? In what ways is that true of him and of Crissy?

8. As a social worker, Betsy adopting Marisa is paramount in turning the girl?s life around. How do you think Marisa has the same impact on Betsy?s life?

9. As young as Marisa is, she?s adept at reading her elders and sees that Crissy is living in a state of denial. What is it about Crissy that tips her off? And in what ways does her denial become a threat to Marisa and to Betsy?

10. In what ways is Las Vegas, a city of ?smoke and mirrors? as Crissy says on page 182, the perfect place in which to lay the foundation for Betsy?s bitcoin outfit, Futurium? Or, for that matter, Crissy?s current life and career?

11. When talking about the odds against the house on page 188, Marisa says, ?The longer you play, the more you lose.? Is that also true when applied to the real-life games that Betsy and Crissy are playing? If so, what are the unexpected advantages of those losses in the long run?

12. As Crissy gets more deeply --- and dangerously --- involved with saving Buckingham Palace and, in turn, her career, do you think she is more fearless and determined, or heedless?

13. In the beginning of the novel, Crissy admits that both she and her sister were naive. In what ways is that true? And considering the events that followed, which sister was more so?

14. In hindsight, Crissy says that if she had to take the same risks and the same chances, she would do it all over again. Considering the danger she put herself, Betsy and Marisa in, do you understand the sentiment?

Author Bio

Chris Bohjalian is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of 26 books, including THE AMATEUR, THE JACKAL'S MISTRESS, THE PRINCESS OF LAS VEGAS, THE LIONESS, HOUR OF THE WITCH, MIDWIVES and THE FLIGHT ATTENDANT, which has been made into a MAX limited series starring Kaley Cuoco. His other books include THE RED LOTUS; THE GUEST ROOM; CLOSE YOUR EYES, HOLD HANDS; THE SANDCASTLE GIRLS; SKELETONS AT THE FEAST; and THE DOUBLE BIND. His novels SECRETS OF EDEN, MIDWIVES and PAST THE BLEACHERS were made into movies, and his work has been translated into more than 35 languages. He is also a playwright (*Wingspan* and *Midwives*). He lives in Vermont.

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