

Fault Lines

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The death of a renowned volcanologist casts suspicion on his young lover in *Fault Lines*, an edgy, atmospheric thriller.

Surtsey is a young volcanologist. Her beloved mother is sick; she feels guilt over her relationship with her married boss, Tom. When Surtsey arrives for a rendezvous with Tom on The Inch, a newly emerged volcano near Edinburgh, she finds him dead. Knowing she will become a suspect and not willing to own up to her affair, Surtsey covers her tracks in hopes that their relationship will never come to light.

But someone else was on the The Inch and is well aware of Surtsey's involvement with Tom. Through Tom's cell phone, they contact Surtsey and threaten to expose her. As she convinces her friends and family to lie for her, Surtsey realizes that her freedom and her life are in danger.

Fault Lines is both a meditation on the volatility of human nature and a gripping thriller with plenty of twists and turns. Surtsey is a flawed main character who makes mistakes at nearly every juncture, yet her deeply felt emotions and perseverance make her a heroine to root for. The contrast between her love and devotion for her dying mother and her callous treatment of others, including of her boyfriend, Brenden, results in new depth.

The mystery itself is just as heavily influenced by the brooding backdrop of the unstable Inch as it is by the people who work around it. Tense scenes are enhanced by the shaking earth and the instability that could at any moment erupt into violence. This dovetails nicely with the simmering motivations of those involved in the murder and cover-up, adding another layer to the enigma.

An original and addictive thriller, *Fault Lines* is as intelligent as it is shocking.

ANGELA MCQUAY (November/December 2018)

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