



An Absolute Scandal

Penny Vincenzi

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Penny Vincenzi, master of the contemporary blockbuster, returns with a moving, engaging portrait of people coping with a notorious financial disaster and its unpredictable emotional repercussions.

Set during the boom-and-bust years of the 1980s, *An Absolute Scandal* follows the lives of a group of people drawn together by their mutual monetary woes when the great financial institution Lloyd's undergoes a devastating downturn. For Nigel Cowper, this means the destruction of his family business; his wife, Lucinda, is willing to do everything she can to help him—except give up her irresistible lover. The powerful, charismatic banker Simon Beaumont and his wife, a highly successful advertising executive, lose everything they worked so hard to acquire; but the ultimate tragedy is something that neither one could have anticipated. The well-to-do are not the only ones suffering: a self-sufficient widow is suddenly deep in debt; a single mother struggles to maintain a comfortable home for her children; and a schoolmaster and his frustrated wife find that financial problems deepen the cracks in their troubled marriage.

As their lives begin a downward spiral, these characters intersect in ways they never saw coming. Written in what has become her signature style of both wit and candor, Penny Vincenzi draws back the curtain and offers an inside view of the greed and social power plays that occur behind the closed doors of upper-crust society . . . where money isn't everything. Sometimes, it's the only thing.

An Absolute Scandal Details

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Author : Penny Vincenzi

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From Reader Review An Absolute Scandal for online ebook

Vivien Young says

Found Penny Vincenzi an ideal "stuck at home with a bad cold" author. This particular book is about high finance, Lloyds of London and the effect of some underhand dealings on investors ill equipped to cope with the financial demands made on them. Brexit Britain is possibly not the ideal time to be reading about rich people's problems with sympathetic understanding, but taken as an historical novel, this is a pretty decent one. If certain aspects and attitudes of the recent past grate, that's fine. Time moves fast these days, history is a lot closer than it once was. Worth a read if you have some down time.

Redfox5 says

A really good read. I was quiet sad when it ended, even tho I was slightly annoyed they didn't name the baby. I like to think they named it Simon. I cried quiet alot when one of the main characters died. I really felt for the people they left behind. It must be a horrible thing to watch your life slowly fall to pieces, losing homes, partners and jobs. The charcters I didn't really like were Richard, Debbie and Joel. I found their story quiet interesting but didn't warm to them for lots of different reasons. Flora was proberly my fave. I'm really glad my sister gave me this and another Penny Vincenzi book becuase I don't think I would have picked them up otherwise (mainly due to their brick size) but I will look out for them in the future.

Christina Polychronis says

Difficult to read due to length as well as small print but the ending made it worth it. I was tempted to drop it but was determined. very complex characters and Vincenzi knows how to keep you interested. Read other novels by her and will read more. If you prefer long novels this is the book to pick up.

Cheryll Butters says

A big read at 881 pages. After all that I'm still not sure how they all got on with their Lloyd's claims. Bit disappointing really...

Grace says

The first proper eighties style bonkbuster that I've read since I was a teenager I think. It wasn't too badly written and ticked along pretty well - was perfect for my incredibly lazy saturday (only left the flat to get some chips). Hilarious class aspect, especially about the horror of state schools. I imagine Vicenzi's audience reflects the primarily comp-educated population and there is fair bit of knowingness about this.

Plum-crazy says

You can always rely on Penny Vincenzi to give you a book to get your teeth into! This is no exception at 881 pages & it's well worth it. It's always interesting working out who will end up with who & while there's not really any surprises, it's good fun getting there.

Very readable & very, very, hard to put down.

Judy Andrews says

Great read!

I really enjoyed this book. I will be looking for more of Penny Vincenzi's books now. What a terrific author!

Sue Lauzon says

Wow this book has taken me almost the entire year to read. With it being 881 pages long between some of the dialogue and the fact that the book is large and heavy to hold, I tried to read some each day. Didn't always work out that way. Anyway, the book was pretty good. I found at times the book delved too much into the financial aspect (too much what Lloyd's was and what was involved in being a name (member)). I was more interested in the relationships in the book and how the characters intertwined with one another.

Daisy says

There is nothing I love more than sinking down into bed with a huge Penny Vincenzi paperback. Her writing is always effortlessly faultless and this one, featuring an actual historical event, is fascinating for someone who grew up just outside of the era featured within the story, although I recognised many of the fashions and features. I found this book completely fascinating and just as high quality as all her other books (with the Lytton saga top of my list). I found myself Googling the actual real life events.

The only characters that I really didn't take to were Debbie and Richard, I found both of them intensely annoying and in the end couldn't care less about their situation. I don't think PV does "normal folk" that well, best stick to the ridiculously named posh people!

Every few years or so I will re-read a PV and once again find comfort in her wonderful writing. This one I last read about 10 years ago so it was almost like discovering it from new, something I am much looking forward to with her next book. It is a shame they take so long, and then of course I have to wait for the

paperback version as the hardback is just so heavy! Keep up the fantastic work.

Robin Nicholas says

I love Penny Vincenzi's books. The other two that I have read take place in the early 1900's which I always find interesting and this one takes place in the late 1980's. What I like about Vincenzi is that she does write somewhat chicklit books....but they are much better. They are well written and filled with an interesting cast of characters. This book centers around the true events of Lloyds of London basically collapsing and what it does to the people who had invested in them. Apparently this was a huge scandal in the late 80's and devastated a lot of people. People who had invested were required by their contract to pay Lloyd's if Lloyd's was experiencing a loss.....and they had to keep paying for years! This is a fictional account of the families who had been living a wealthy lifestyle....boarding schools, second and third homes, horses etc. This story then follows what happens to these different people who have to now deal with huge debt. I liked this book a lot, but not quite as much as her others. "Angel" is one of my favorite books. It takes place in a publishing house in London in the 1920's. I would recommend reading that over this....but I will check out more of Vincenzi's books. I like her writing style and her topics.

MetLineReader says

Loved it and a perfect read on the beach in the Caribbean

Andrea says

Absolutely deliciously snooty upperclass England saga based around the fall of Lloyds in the late eighties/early nineties. Lots of schmooze and glitzy romance with just the right amount of suspense and actual plot. A minor dead end in one of the plot lines goes unnoticed as you race for the finish to find out what will happen to your favourite characters. Kept me up till 1pm...had to finish... A very enjoyable Penny Vincenzi at her best.

Nette says

Penny Vincenzi is my secret shame; I've read all of her books. The characters are unrealistic, the dialog is silly, and the plots are ludicrous, but I can't stop. I keep waiting for my more intellectual friends to stage an Intervention, a la A&E. "Jeanette, these folks are here because they just love you to death, and they can't stand that you're destroying your mind with this trash. Either you go to rehab today, where you will read nothing but Joyce Carol Oates for 90 days, or they will never speak to you again. Yes or no?"

Janine says

This book was not what I expected from Penny Vincenzi. It also took a real turn midway - the first half of the

book focuses on a key lawsuit which you expect to be the focus of the whole book, but then the second half completely moves its focus onto the impact surrounding a key player's death. Very interesting coverage of the Lloyd's scandal which gave me much more understanding of those events. Great reading, really enjoyed this book.

Kathryn says

A very large cast of characters, the financial crises of the '80's in England, the shady dealings of Lloyd's insurance. All combine to make a convoluted story of loss and suicide, marital unrest and infidelity. I am a little over such large books. This would be a great book for the right audience.

Kristine says

way too long

Anne says

How many times can a writer make people vomit in a book? This must hold the record and that's about the most drama you get here - how imaginative!

Rating this as "1" seems extremely generous but the rating numbers don't go into negatives.

Dreadful book. It bothers me that people pick up this kind of soulless book at the airport before they go for their 2 week holiday and that is all they might read in a year.

I picked this book up at a charity event wanting something that would take longer than a day or two to complete. It's full of "he said" and "she said." Hopeless, drivelling dialogue that just goes on...and on...and on....

The characters (that's really too strong a word for them) make me want to slap them all. Wishy washy, thick-as-mince Lucinda, simpering Catherine and pathetic, whining Richard. Does make you appreciate anew how interesting and wonderful your own friends and acquaintances are though.

Tarquilla says

Another sweeping saga from Penny Vincenzi. She includes so many characters, all deep and making you root for them through all the troubles she sends their way. Sadly she passed away whilst I was reading this book. She was an amazing author and created some great stories that will be enjoyed for many years.

Rachel says

Penny Vincenzi writes about money; in wills, in business, in spectacular gains and equally spectacular losses, etc etc. Normally these are good books to read and enjoy as soap operas. I always like the twists and

turns she takes to get to the end pairings! However I was very disappointed in the unexpectedly flat characterization, the sexism, incredibly tone deaf class commentary, and the dreary, tedious ending of *An Absolute Scandal*. There is a woman whose only purpose is to serve as a reminder of the existence of her husband, culminating in a terrible abortion side plot. Another cringe inducing marriage somehow survives, but Vincenzi comes out looking all the more contrived for it. One main female character has a total of 50 pages and I estimate every single one had a reference to how "endearingly" clumsy she was- go die. This book took what could have been a perfectly good setting, confirmed my worst expectations, then threw it in the trash as a grand finale.

Larren says

I just cannot get into this book after two separate attempts. I have no sympathy or even interest in the characters. They are all entitled privileged snobs and the women are seriously ignorant of their financial situation and plight. And this is the 1980's.
