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The Lincoln Lawyer (Mickey Haller)



Synopsis

Best-selling author Michael Connelly, whose character-driven literary mysteries have earned him a wide following, breaks from the gate in the over-crowded field of legal thrillers and leaves every other contender from Grisham to Turow in the dust with this tightly plotted, brilliantly paced, impossible-to-put-down novel. Criminal defense attorney Mickey Haller's father was a legendary lawyer whose clients included gangster Mickey Cohen (in a nice twist, Cohen's gun, given to Dad then bequeathed to his son, plays a key role in the plot). But Dad also passed on an important piece of advice that's especially relevant when Mickey takes the case of a wealthy Los Angeles realtor accused of attempted murder: "The scariest client a lawyer will ever have is an innocent client. Because if you [screw] up and he goes to prison, it'll scar you for life." Louis Roulet, Mickey's "franchise client" (so-called because he's able and willing to pay whatever his defense costs) seems to be the one his father warned him against, as well as being a few rungs higher on the socio-economic ladder than the drug dealers, homeboys, and motorcycle thugs who comprise Mickey's regular case load. But as the holes in Roulet's story tear Mickey's theory of the case to shreds, his thoughts turn more to Jesus Menendez, a former client convicted of a similar crime who's now languishing in San Quentin. Connelly tellingly delineates the code of legal ethics Mickey lives by: "It didn't matter...whether the defendant 'did it' or not. What mattered was the evidence against him--the proof--and if and how it could be neutralized. My job was to bury the proof, to color the proof a shade of gray. Gray was the color of reasonable doubt." But by the time his client goes to trial, Mickey's feeling a few very reasonable doubts of his own. While Mickey's courtroom pyrotechnics dazzle, his behind-the-scenes machinations and manipulations are even more incendiary in this taut, gripping novel, which showcases all of Connelly's literary gifts. There's not an excess sentence or padded paragraph in it--what there is, happily, is a character who, like Harry Bosch, deserves a franchise series of his own. --Jane Adams

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This novel is definitely on a par with the best of the fifteen stories in Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch series; any initial disappointment that might be experienced by Bosch's fans when they discover that Connelly has at least temporarily abandoned Harry in favor of Mickey Haller, a criminal defense attorney whose seemingly guilty clients often benefit from police errors, will almost immediately be replaced by the recognition that Connelly has created another character at least as complex and interesting as Harry. Mickey's persona is almost the opposite of Harry's, for him the law is about the art of the possible, his clients are often individuals who are down on their luck and on the wrong side of the law. Harry concentrates on identifying the guilty in order to provide justice for the victims and their families; Mickey is afraid that some day he will be hired to defend a client whose innocence he will be incapable of recognizing and thus he will simply pursue the "best deal" as opposed to throwing all his effort into gaining a "not guilty" verdict. The story opens with Mickey receiving a telephone call from Fernando Valenzuela (no, not the pitcher, but the bail bondsman) in his office while on his way to a court hearing for Harold Casey, a member of the Road Saints motorcycle gang who is awaiting trial on multiple drug and weapons charges. (The Lincoln Town Car which is his office is an integral element both in his life and also eventually becomes an important detail in the particular case which is at the center of this story.

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