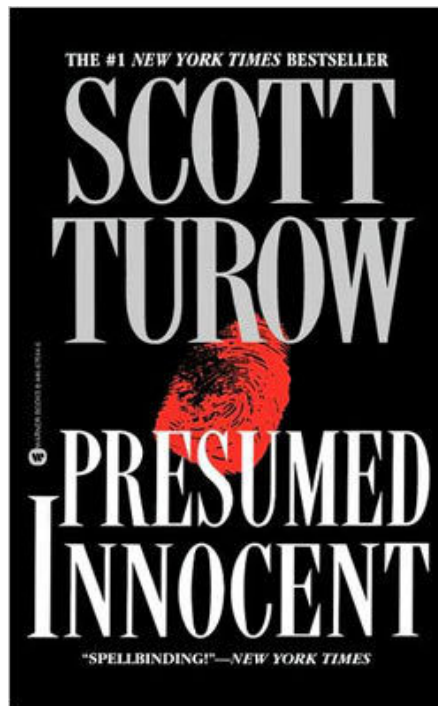




Presumed Innocent

Scott Turow

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Rusty Sabich is chief deputy prosecuting attorney in a large mid-western city. His boss is in the midst of a bitter campaign for re-election. A fellow prosecuting attorney, Carolyn Polhemus, has been brutally murdered. Rusty is handling the investigation-- and he needs results.

Before election day.

Before his illicit affair with Carolyn is uncovered.

Election day brings a new prosecuting attorney into office. A political enemy who wants Rusty out. A man whose own secret investigation has revealed Rusty's relationship with Carolyn. A man who takes Rusty off the case-- and charges him with murder. Rusty now faces a long battle in court. Each side will twist the evidence to win its case, and try any procedural ploy, any courtroom trick that might ensure victory. Rusty's ordeal will uncover corruption, deceit, depravity and incompetence-- and keep you spellbound. Who did kill Carolyn Polhemus?

Presumed Innocent Details

Date : Published April 5th 2010 by Warner Books Inc (first published December 31st 1986)

ISBN : 9780446350983

Author : Scott Turow

Format : Paperback 421 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Crime, Legal Thriller, Suspense, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review Presumed Innocent for online ebook

Michaela says

What a mess. It was unnecessarily racist, and unjustifiably long.

I opened this book expecting to be gripped, suprised, and excited. Instead, I was disappointed.

It was a far too long blow-by-blow account of unimportant details. I guess who the killer was halfway through the book, and it somehow managed to further disappoint me, in the process of revealing the killer to me at the end.

I'm not even sure whether or not I should go into the mess of a sub-plot. Becuase the killer is, surprise surprise, his wife, and because he wanted to avoid having to end with her confessing her crime to the courtroom, Turow decided to end the trial abruptly, through the use of that infamous 'B-file'. Judge Larren was once involved in bribery, and through fear of all of his dirt being brought to light in the courtroom, he dismisses the trial, and sets dusty free. No one cared in the slighest. Practically every one knew, but not one single character cared. Why, then should I have cared? I didn't. It was sloppy tactic. It's as if Scott Turow sat at his desk scratching away with his pencil in a 'got to have a twist, got to have a twist' frenzy, and was prepared to jot down ANYTHING, to deliver that god damned twist.

I can't remember being gripped by the story, once, and the highest point, was the second to last trial.

I gave it two stars instead of one, because although a drag it's written well (linguistically), and the facts pumped behind all of the law, and forensics, were interesting (if you like that sort of thing).

All in all, it was nothing out of the ordinary, and am quite miffed that the reviews on the back claimed that this book would take over my life for a while. Maybe I should be blaming them.

Richard says

7/10

An enjoyable legal thriller that really hits it stride in the courtroom and less so in the bits outside of the courtroom. I thought it was an interesting, and quite novel, idea to set the first pages after the murder has occurred and then fill in the blanks as you go along. A lot of back story was needed to get the reader up to speed and this is when things were a little slow and sometimes less interesting with the political campaign less absorbing but we know what is just around the corner.

When the story gets into the courtroom the book was hard to put down. The dialogue flowed with ease and there were many times when you were keen to just read that next chapter to find out what was going to happen instead of going to sleep.

Whilst the solution to the murder and side plots weren't all that great in the end it had some of the best courtroom interrogations I've read in a long time.

If only the whole story was as tight as those scenes this would have been much higher rated overall. Worth a read if this is a genre you're interested in.

If you enjoy this try: "The Lincoln Lawyer" by Michael Connelly

Scott Rhee says

I met Scott Turow when he came to visit my college to promote "Presumed Innocent", which I thought was a great book at the time. I haven't read it in almost 20 years (Christ, has it been that long since I was in college?), but I remember some of the details in his writing that made him stand out from all the other best-selling thriller writers out there, most notably John Grisham. Both of them were inevitably compared to each other because of their courtroom settings and knowledge of the legal profession, but Turow was generally trying to do something different than Grisham. It's Turow's details (his naturalistic dialogue, his attempts to flesh out minor characters, his reflections into the darkness of the human condition) that I appreciated more from a writer's perspective and that I probably recall better than the actual plot, which was, if I recall correctly, a seemingly run-of-the-mill whodunnit.

Laura says

4.5 stars ... It was just a little too long. Otherwise, this was a stellar reading experience.

I'm doing a bunch of challenges this year. And a couple led me to reading this book, & to reading Turow for the first time. And I'm so grateful for that. I might not have gotten around to this otherwise, & that would be a shame.

This book has been out for over 30 years, & made into a movie. So there isn't much I can add to the conversation around it. I'll just say it's as much a character study as it is a procedural crime story, as much the story of a messy relationship as that of a trial, as introspective as it is cinematic.

Also, somehow I guessed the culprit early on - just a hunch. But the book was so well-written that I gave up my guess early on & went along for the ride. You should, too.

Asghar Abbas says

Excellent, excellent, excellent. Even if it was saddled with a typical denouement. Still excellent.

Davyne DeSye says

This is a terrific murder mystery, as well as being a fun legal thriller. Having spent decades as a lawyer, I often find that books featuring lawyers, the law, and courtroom scenes often contain errors – and this one doesn't! (It completely messes with my suspension of disbelief if in legal fiction, I end up thinking, "That wouldn't have been allowed.")

I picked this book up because I recently re-watched the movie (which I love)... and there was one area in the movie that – while not wrong or impossible – made me cock my head to one side and raise an eyebrow.

Hmm, I thought. I wonder if that's Hollywood or the way it was written?

Happily, I enjoyed the book very much (in addition to getting the answer to my question – Hollywood cut one very small scene, which, if included, would have kept my eyebrow firmly in place, but which, honestly, to anyone but a lawyer is really not needed). The mystery (even though I knew the answer) was well played out, the characters were fully fleshed out and the writing was smooth. The author does a great job of keeping the legal aspects clear and understandable to the layman.

In this story, Rusty Sabich, is a prosecuting attorney. When one of his colleagues, Carolyn Polhemus is murdered, he is put in charge of the investigation. Rusty is torn, professionally and personally, by Carolyn's death – because not too long before the murder, they had had an affair. Even worse, every bit of evidence they have about the murderer is pointing to Rusty being the culprit... Fantastic stuff.

I must say, the Rusty character in the book is not quite the tower of strength Harrison Ford portrays in the movie, but naturally, the book is much richer in details of the different characters' motivations and the legal process. The movie does an excellent job of rendering the story, but if you want to delve a little deeper, this book will deliver.

Highly recommended to lovers of legal thrillers!

True rating: 4.5 stars.

Floripiquita says

E libro es fantástico, con un final maravillosamente hilado y para mi totalmente inesperado. ¿Y qué decir de la película con Harrison Ford?

Sheri says

A renowned attorney in the DA's office is having an affair with a sex crimes attorney. When she turns up dead and it looks like rape, he is pinned as the murderer. The majority of the book takes place in the courtroom but it is by no means dull. You'll never guess who was the real killer!

At first, the book starts out as brash, crude and offensive at times because of the 'cop talk' banter. It was too explicit for my tastes and I nearly put the book down for good. I am glad I hung in there because this book ended up being one I could not put it down if I tried - it was a real page turner!

In addition to all of the four-letter-words, the author actually has quite an exquisite vocabulary! I often felt little inner celebrations over his perfect selection of a particular descriptive word - words not commonly heard in modern literature. The author writes in the manner that cops & criminals speak, in all truthfulness, yet has a remarkable ability to dive into the deepest of emotions, intentions and observations - so much so, that I actually double checked to be sure it really was a man doing the writing!

The balance between cold hard facts and relationships is phenomenal and the story has a real climax ending that stays in your mind long after you're done reading.

Grant says

Some lawyers should become writers, others should not. Scott Turow falls squarely in the latter category. Once you realize that half this novel can be skipped, as it is useless exposition about characters the author fails to make sympathetic in the first place, it becomes a much shorter read. Combine that with the fact that half the character descriptions border on, if not delve fully into, racism, it may not be worth reading at all. (I'm sure Turow would say it's the character speaking and not the author, but they are one in the same) My final complaint with the book is that around 1/3 of the way into it I thought, "He'd better not end it that way," and sure enough he draws this winding course just to bring things back to a terribly cliched, Law & Order ending, though without any of the talent or ability of the television writers.

B the BookAddict says

I must admit that I saw the movie first, then read the book. But the book is so much better. I love the fact that Turow is a lawyer writing about the law; he knows his stuff. Even taking that into account, Turow does not weigh the reader down with too much legalese, something that adds to the book's success. This novel was the first that I read of this author: but definitely not my last. 4★

Jane Stewart says

3 ½ stars. Some parts very good, I was eager to know what would happen. Other parts average.

STORY BRIEF:

Married prosecutor Rusty is accused of murdering his former lover. The first third of the book is what happens prior to the indictment. The last two-thirds is primarily the trial. It's told in first person by Rusty.

REVIEWER'S OPINION:

This did not have the typical bad guy killer. I liked the unusual plot and motivations. I saw the movie several years ago and I remembered who did it, which was the same as in the book. But other things were very different between the movie and the book. During the first third, I was impatient for things to happen. It seemed too drawn out, getting to know various characters: lawyers, cops, wife, lover. Then when Rusty was indicted for the murder of Carolyn I was frustrated. I was anxious about the ending. Would it be happy or not? I didn't want to invest another ten hours, just to be let down and depressed at the end. So I read the last chapter which summarized many of the details, and I was relieved. I liked the ending for Rusty. Then I went back to where I left off at his indictment and listened to the rest of the book. My enjoyment from that point on was much better than when I was worrying about the ending. The last two-thirds is mostly about evidence and watching the judge and the lawyers on each side. At times it was exciting. Sometimes it was slow. For someone like me, I'd recommend reading the last chapter (40) first, then go to the beginning and read the whole book. As a result I paid more attention to key characters. Since I knew certain things would happen, I was eagerly anticipating those events thinking "when's this going to happen?"

There were two scenes describing torture and brutality which bothered me. I wish the author had NOT

included them. They were about other cases the prosecutor worked on. One a small boy tortured by his mother. Another a man put in prison, raped, and suffered permanent damage to his body.

NARRATOR:

The narrator Edward Herrmann was fine.

DATA:

Unabridged audiobook reading time: 15 hrs and 33 mins. Swearing language: strong, including religious swear words. Sexual language: moderate. Sexual content: About 7 sex scenes, mostly referred to, not a lot of detail shown. Setting: current day mid-sized city and suburbs in the U.S. Book Copyright: 1987. Genre: legal mystery. Ending: Good enough for those who want happy endings.

Gaby says

I first read Presumed Innocent almost fifteen years ago. I'd been thinking of going to law school and Presumed Innocent is on the list of books that many law schools send you the summer before you begin studying. I remember thinking that the book spent more time on legal technicalities than the other thrillers that I'd read. Reading Presumed Innocent with an eye to joining the profession gave it a certain air as well.

Now after years as an entirely different sort of lawyer, the detective work, legal technicalities and procedural law aspects continue to delight me. Though I've read the book and watched the movie and am vaguely aware that a twist is sure to come, Presumed Innocent draws me in as though it were completely new. Scott Turow's writing remains fresh and engaging.

Other reviewers have mentioned that the book has lost its impact for them, that they're not as impressed by it years later. I have a very different reaction to the book -- years later and after close to 15 years studying and practicing law, I find that Presumed Innocent has grown to be even more gripping and entertaining. Though you might have expected me to figure out the ending given that I'd read the book before and seen the movie, but the enjoyment comes from how Turow built up the suspense and described the trial. It's the execution of the concept that makes Presumed Innocent a legal thriller that will last for years to come. I'm very much looking forward to reading Turow's next book Innocent that comes out on May 4, 2010.

ISBN-10: 0446676446 - Paperback

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing (December 1, 2000), 512 pages.

Review copy provided by the publisher.

Supratim says

This is one of the best books that I have read recently. It is a great legal thriller cum murder mystery. No wonder the book finds mention in both the top 100 mystery/crime novel lists published by the Britain-based Crime Writers' Association and by the Mystery Writers of America. Both the lists were published in the nineties and feature some of the finest specimens of crime writing. The lists can be found here - [Link](#)

The story is narrated by Rozat K. Sabich aka Rusty, chief deputy prosecutor of Kindle county who is also the protagonist. The story begins with the murder of Carolyn, another prosecuting attorney, with whom Rusty had an affair and never got over his obsession of her. Rusty gets the responsibility of investigating the crime

PROSECUTOR: So, what do we think?

CROWD: Presumed innocent!

PROSECUTOR: I can't hear you.

CROWD: PRESUMED INNOCENT!!

PROSECUTOR: Thank you, that's a great answer! And now, indictment two: rape. Katie Johnson, in another recent deposition, claimed that "she was subject to extreme sexual and physical abuse by Donald J. Trump and Jeffrey E. Epstein, including forcible rape during a four month time span, when she was still only a minor of age 13." What do we think? Innocent or guilty?

MAN IN CROWD: This is hearsay too!

WOMAN IN CROWD: But she does have a witness, "Tiffany Doe".

SECOND MAN IN CROWD: It could be politically motivated though. Hard to tell. All the same, she should have her day in court.

PROSECUTOR: So, what do we think?

CROWD: Presumed innocent!

PROSECUTOR: I can't hear you.

CROWD: PRESUMED INNOCENT!!

PROSECUTOR: You're all such terrific guys! So, indictment three: fraud and racketeering. Donald Trump's "Trump University" is the subject of *several* lawsuits, including two class action suits filed in California and one filed in New York by then-attorney general Eric Schneiderman. The many petitioners claim that they were swindled out of sums of up to \$60,000 dollars in exchange for courses that were essentially worthless. What do we think? Innocent or guilty?

MAN IN CROWD: You gotta admit there's a lot of evidence.

WOMAN IN CROWD: I read the playbook when the judge ruled that it could be released. Disgusting.

SECOND MAN IN CROWD: But let's not get ahead of ourselves. I need to hear the other side before I make up my mind. And hey, caveat emptor.

PROSECUTOR: So, what do we want?

CROWD: Due process!

PROSECUTOR: I can't hear you.

CROWD: DUE PROCESS!

PROSECUTOR: I still can't hear you.

CROWD: **DUE PROCESS!!!**

[A chant starts up]

One, two, three, four
We must all respect the law!
Six, seven, eight, nine
Stay the right side of the line!

HILLARY CLINTON: Thank you, thank you, thank you! See, that's the America I'm fighting for. A country where the rule of law is paramount, where due process is respected, and where everyone is presumed innocent until they're proven guilty. Even Donald Trump.

Ned Hayes says

Presumed Innocent is one of those landmark books that really demonstrated to readers what a legal story, a "law novel" was actually capable of doing. Turow's work in this debut novel is so far above John Grisham's or Steve Martini's popular entertainments of legal "thrillers."

In this first novel, Turow really demonstrates the full reach and complexity of the human soul under duress. I admire the hell out of Turow for creating this complex story as his first breakthrough novel, and I so wish that his other novels had been just as profound and startling revelations in their revelations.

Instead his other books -- although very, very good -- seem to dwell too much on the surface fabric of the legal world without getting into the warp and weave of what makes human beings love and learn, hate, and long for each other.

I love **Presumed Innocent** not only because of its language but because of the brilliant storytelling. Turow withholds just the right amount, and tells the story in a bold breathtaking first person flashback (a therapist is only a slight frame on this device).

My first novel **Coeur d'Alene Waters** owes quite a bit to Turow's deft moves in **Presumed Innocent**.

Pye says

[the little boy abused by his mother and the CPA who went to prison (hide spoiler)]

Michael says

I recently re-read this, and it's still wonderful. The writing is sharp and brooding, and the plotting is superb.

Jim says

I'm surprised I didn't like this. The reader was pretty good, but I just didn't like the way the author wrote.

There was too much back story dumping irrelevant data that detracted from the main story. I might have stuck with it longer, except I didn't like the main character enough.

Lady Clementina finch-ffarowmore says

Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Rozat “Rusty” Sabich finds himself investigating the murder of co-worker Carolyn Polhemus (with whom he had an affair) amidst a heated election campaign in which his boss Raymond Horgan is seeking re-election. He isn’t making much headway, at least not as fast as is needed, and soon finds tables turned, and himself in the docks charged with Carolyn’s murder. Narrated in first person, the book takes us through Rusty’s indictment and trial, where he has to deal for the first time with being on the other side, and of course, the murder mystery itself.

The story takes us deep into the politics and law enforcement of the fictional Kindle county where everyone it seems has something to hide, and beneath ostensibly ordinary, “respectable” appearances, there is plenty of sleaze (a bit too much for my liking), and for a bit into the city’s underbelly, teeming with drugs, gangs, and danger. But the trial itself and the murder mystery made the book a pretty good read for me. The courtroom scenes and some excellent cross-examinations were very Perry Mason, and made for exciting reading. It was in fact when the trial began that I really started to get drawn into the book, and didn’t want to leave off. The murder mystery was rather thrilling and unlike the trial (when one might just predict the end result, though not how it was reached which the interesting bit), I wasn’t really sure how things would turn out or even where they were headed. Is it political, personal, or has Rusty stumbled onto something in the course of his investigation? Even when you think you finally have the answer (which is a surprise), Turow springs another unexpected surprise that I certainly didn’t see coming.
