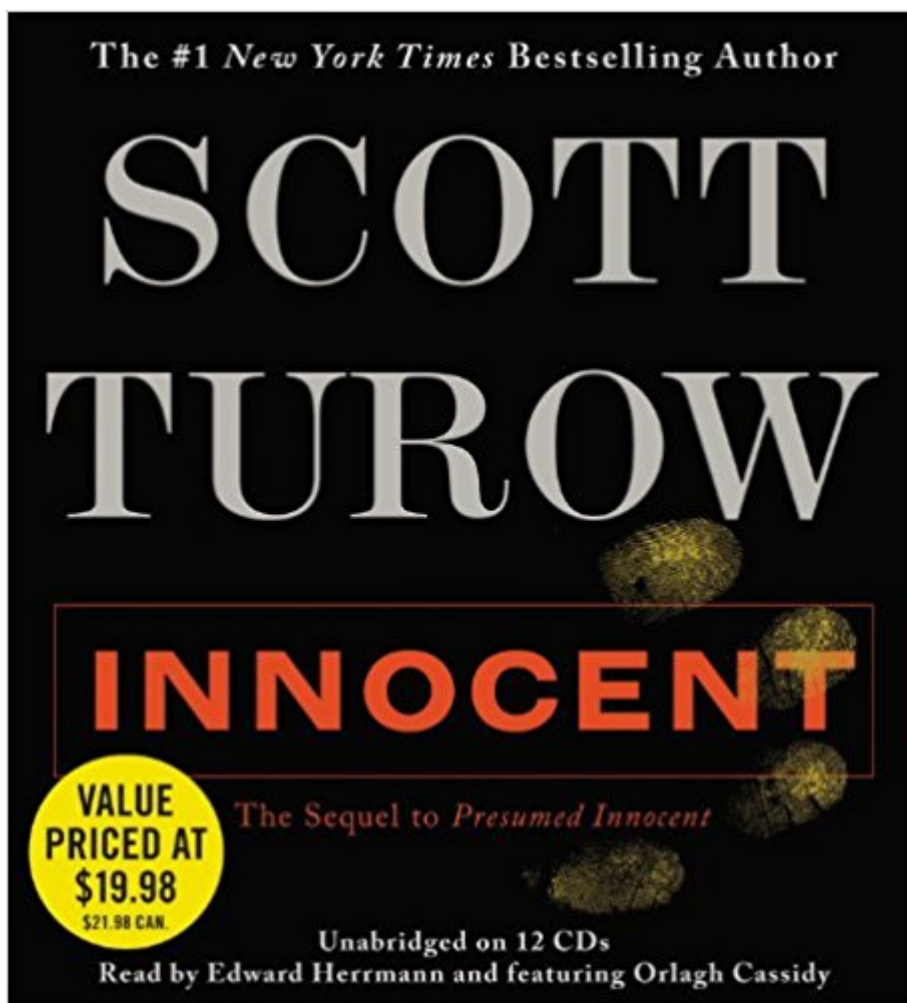


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Innocent



Synopsis

The sequel to the genre-defining, landmark bestseller *Presumed Innocent*, *INNOCENT* continues the story of Rusty Sabich and Tommy Molto who are, once again, twenty years later, pitted against each other in a riveting psychological match after the mysterious death of Rusty's wife.

Book Information

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[Authors, A-Z > \(T \) > Turow, Scott](#) #2631 in [Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers](#) #2863

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Mesmerizing prose and intricate plotting lift Turow's superlative legal thriller, his best novel since his bestselling debut, *Presumed Innocent*, to which this is a sequel. In 2008, 22 years after the events of the earlier book, former lawyer Rusty Sabich, now a Kindle County, Ill., chief appellate judge, is again suspected of murdering a woman close to him. His wife, Barbara, has died in her bed of what appear to be natural causes, yet Rusty comes under scrutiny from his old nemesis, acting prosecuting attorney Tommy Molto, who unsuccessfully prosecuted him for killing his mistress decades earlier. Tommy's chief deputy, Jim Brand, is suspicious because Rusty chose to keep Barbara's death a secret, even from their son, Nat, for almost an entire day, which could have allowed traces of poison to disappear. Rusty's candidacy for a higher court in an imminent election; his recent clandestine affair with his attractive law clerk, Anna Vostic; and a breach of judicial ethics complicate matters further. Once again, Turow displays an uncanny ability for making the passions and contradictions of his main characters accessible and understandable. (May)

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Reviewers agreed that *Innocent* is a worthy follow-up to *Presumed Innocent*. Turow is ever a master of the legal system, and he relays his intimate knowledge through intelligent writing, good characterization, and generally suspenseful plotting. The *New York Times* noted some implausible developments, and the different narrators--which reveal "a rich portrait of the resentments, fears and loyalties that fester over years among family members and co-workers" (*Miami Herald*)--also caused some confusion for reviewers. Despite these quibbles, *Entertainment Weekly*, despite its relatively tepid review, spoke for all critics by noting, "It's a thrill to see the old faces again." --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

How did I miss this one? I'm sorry to be so late to the party but I just read *Innocent* and I devoured it in two days. I loved *Presumed Innocent*, the book and the movie, but I was always wondering what happened after. Now I know! I'm not about to drop spoilers here but I will say that Turow answered some of my questions about the family but I now I have a hundred more. Besides the fabulous court room scenes and plot, I loved the character development and the "what would you do" scenarios. Talk about rock and a hard place! I do have a few bones to pick but I can't discuss them here without spoilers but I need to find a discussion board on this story so I can get it off my chest. I will do that now. In the meantime, by all means, buy this book and save it for a long weekend read!

My take on this book's origin: this was never Turow's book. He didn't own it or take responsibility for it. The publisher invented it, paid off Turow and kept hounding him until he delivered. When they demanded another chapter, he'd hammer it out like an overdue term paper in high school. Turow knows in his heart he betrayed us. After writing *Presumed Innocent*, which earned the hard way its place at the giddy heights few writers ever experience, one has to wonder how he could allow himself to deliver this book to our table. He betrayed our faith in him. Once again, we are reminded that even the best of us can be bought at the right price. Okay, we admit that even superb writers are human, with fatal flaws. damnit. Money wins again. So the book.....like many other readers I found the character Nat was well named. He was precisely like a gnat that continually annoys you with his childish behavior, vocabulary, being reduced to tears at every turn.....a twerp, a gnat. We KNOW what that Turow is capable of creating not just characters, but actual people. He had this rare gift. We know he has extraordinary skills, imagination and the ability to take his readers to a place they long to be, with characters who exude credibility, unpredictability and intense intelligence. Stern came closest in this book to being that character, the one with whom I found myself wishing I could spend an evening in conversation. Disappointment isn't the feeling I have. I've felt this before

and remember it too well. It's betrayal. And I can't forgive it.

Unfortunately, "Innocent" looks more like a writing exercise than a real novel, with its horribly complex structure, but some of the individual sections do show Scott Turow's wonderful talent. His courtroom scenes are still splendid, except when they are spoiled by sentimentality about the perpetually adolescent Nat. Tommy Molto's new life is exciting, and Turow's brand new character Judge Yee is a triumph: "No, no, Mr. Molto, not in America," said the judge. "No prison for what in man's head." Somehow this novel seems to cheapen Turow's "Presumed Innocent." There was a sense of cosmic mystery in that first novel, particularly surrounding Rusty's relationship with Carolyn, which is completely lacking in this sequel. The glimpses we got of Rusty in other novels indicated he was changing, but not to the simple-minded philanderer and ordinary, troubled husband we see here. The Nat we saw in "Presumed Innocent" could never have become the trendy, shallow youth who mouths contemporary clichés in this novel. The freshness of "Presumed Innocent" is rotting in "Innocent." One final complaint. I was slightly bothered in "Presumed Innocent" by the stupidity of the whole cast of characters. It seemed impossible that no one would even consider the real murderer as a suspect. In "Innocent" it is totally absurd that even twenty years later, with all the new evidence available, not even the supposedly brilliant Anna even thinks for a moment who the real killer of Carolyn might have been. I gave "Innocent" three stars for its courtroom scenes, and for the new look at Sandy Stern and Tommy Molto, but you might prefer to imagine the sixty-year-old Rusty rather than to read the novel and see how he and others around him have deteriorated.

I enjoyed this book but was disappointed by the ending. As other reviewers have noted, there are no characters to root for. I would also like to note that you should definitely read (or see the excellent movie) Presumed Innocent before reading this book. I would imagine anybody who picked up Innocent without knowledge of Presumed Innocent will make some incorrect assumptions regarding the history of Rusty, Barbara and Tommy. There are new characters in this book. . . none of them particularly likeable or interesting. I didn't hate this book - but in the end it was not as good as I had hoped it would be.

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