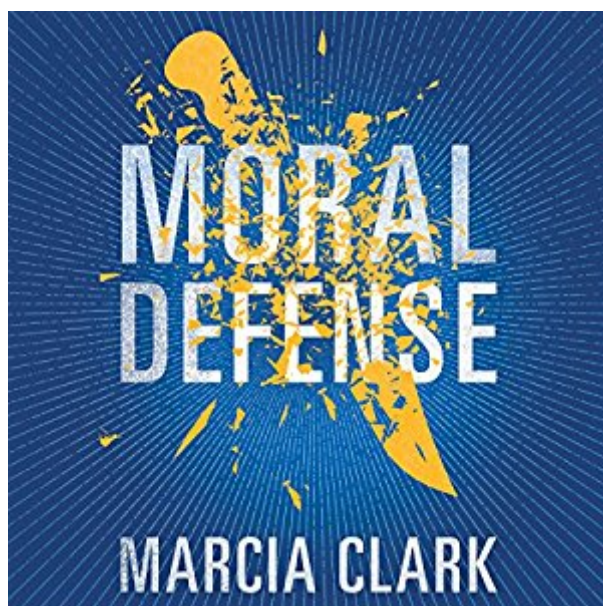


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Moral Defense: Samantha Brinkman, Book 2



Synopsis

For defense attorney Samantha Brinkman, it's not about guilt or innocence - it's about making sure her clients walk. In the follow-up to bestselling *Blood Defense*, Samantha is hired as the legal advocate for Cassie Sonnenberg after a brutal stabbing left her father and brother dead, and her mother barely clinging to life. It's a tabloid-ready case that has the nation in an uproar - and Sam facing her biggest challenge yet. Why did Cassie survive? Is she hiding something? As Sam digs in to find the answers, she's surprised to find herself identifying with Cassie, becoming more and more personally entangled in the case. But when Sam finally discovers the reason for that kinship, she faces a choice she never imagined she'd have to make.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read the other books of Marcia Clark's, and enjoyed them immensely for the legal strategy. This book, however, has the characters skirting too close to the ethical line many times. Unless the ethical code in California is much different than where I practice, it is almost shocking to see an attorney write of these events. This was a distraction to me from the main story line.

Samantha Brinkman has taken on a case of a young girl. Her father and brother had been brutally stabbed and her mother was clinging to life. The story was that she was supposedly sexually assaulted repeatedly by both the father and brother. Her school counselor seems a little too close to the situation, and it turns out that she too, had been having illicit affairs with the girl. All of this is

hitting a bit too close to home for Samantha, as she had also been abused as a child. Samantha is also dodging the Ororzco families. Ricardo had been one of her clients who had been a real piece of work. Samantha managed to work a deal for him, and then while no one was looking, changed his custody assignment to one with his rival gang. He was shivved that night and died. Now the family wants to know who did this and is looking for payback. The story seems to wane toward the middle, and at times it feels as though there are some 'fluff' additions to the story just to make it longer. Overall, it was a good story, and it kept my attention waiting to see what happened next.

The second in a series, we are once again treated to our protagonist, the defense attorney with a complex childhood, Sam Brinkman. Sam met her father in the first book, gave up on her narcissistic mother, and attempted to put her troubled childhood in some adult perspective. Her case in this book makes that more difficult as a 15 yr old claims sexual abuse as her reason for murdering her adoptive family. Did she or didn't she do it? Marcia Clark has always written well but her dexterity with mysteries has really gotten good by now. She does an excellent job of playing with readers and keeping us guessing until the very end; long after we thought we figured everything out. This book is a great mystery.

The first time I saw a Marcia Clark book, I was surprised. (I think it was Killer Ambition) I didn't realize she was an author. I really enjoyed that book, so I got a few others. This is the 4th one of her books I've read. (I think!) She really spins a good yarn! Good story, good pace, liked all the players, and I wonder if she lives vicariously through Sam. I mean, Sam kind of deals her own justice, ya know? The "evil" in me likes that sort of thing!

Ms Clark is a gifted writer! I only have one caveat, below. Fast paced, interesting, good characterization, witty dialog and so forth, I enjoyed it very much and will keep reading her books. (This is the second one I've read, the first S. Brinkman was the first.) My caveat - I got annoyingly distracted in both books by the " 'd" contractions used repeatedly throughout the books. Such as "that'd" for "that had"; "it'd" for "it would". I guess once or twice wouldn't have been so distracting, but it's done so continuously it's annoying. Couldn't grade down a whole star for that, though.

I liked the story which kept me going back and forth...did she or didn't she. But what I had a problem with was the continual put-down of law enforcement. Sure there are bad cops, but there are bad lawyers as well, and Sam Brinkman, while portrayed as the hero, did her fair share of shady

business, including setting up the murder of one of the bad guys and the murder of a bad cop because they "deserved it" and it served the purpose of keeping her out of trouble. The lack of a moral compass caused me to dislike Sam. Do I like justice? Yes. But not at the expense of justice itself. I have read a couple other books by Ms Clark and enjoyed them but I won't be reading any more Sam Brinkman stories.

I'm still in the middle of reading this book. I find it very compelling, and I find it hard to put down at night to get some sleep. I recommend this book to anyone that likes "who done it" type books. It has kept me in suspense since the 1st page.

Because the author is Marcia Clark and the protagonist of this series is a criminal attorney, one would assume the theme is one of a legal or courtroom thriller. If that is one's expectations, you will be very disappointed. In this book, while the protagonist is a criminal lawyer and there is a "case", this is all a prop for a criminal whodunit. In that way, it succeeds nicely. There are the usual twists and turns, near misses for all parties, and satisfying outcome. Don't look for any deep character development; in fact the brief love interest sort of shows up and disappears without rhyme or reason. Still, this is a quick read and would certainly be entertaining for an airplane or the beach. There are three unrelated subplots in this case. I found them distracting and unhelpful. In many respects they are fillers since the core story is not that long. But in all of these cases, there is little compelling interest and the characters and their stories are dull. One of them is set up for appearances in the future; a decision I hope Clark chooses against.

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