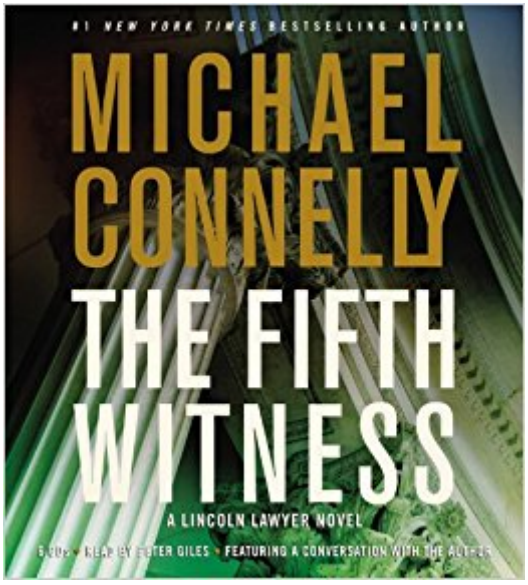
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The Fifth Witness (Mickey Haller)



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Synopsis

Mickey Haller has fallen on tough times. He expands his business into foreclosure defense, only to see one of his clients accused of killing the banker she blames for trying to take away her home. Mickey puts his team into high gear to exonerate Lisa Trammel, even though the evidence and his own suspicions tell him his client is guilty. Soon after he learns that the victim had black market dealings of his own, Haller is assaulted, too--and he’s certain he’s on the right trail. Despite the danger and uncertainty, Haller mounts the best defense of his career in a trial where the last surprise comes after the verdict is in. Connelly proves again why he "may very well be the best novelist working in the United States today" (San Francisco Chronicle).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Connelly’s compelling fourth legal thriller featuring Mickey Haller (after Reversal) finds the maverick L.A. lawyer who uses his Lincoln town car as an office specializing in "foreclosure defense." Haller’s first foreclosure client, Lisa Trammel, is fighting hard to keep her home, maybe too hard. The bank has gotten a restraining order to stop Trammel’s protests, and she becomes the prime suspect when Mitchell Bondurant, a mortgage banker, is killed with a hammer in his office parking lot. A ton of evidence points to Trammel, but Haller crafts an impressive defense that includes "the fifth witness" of the title. Connelly has a sure command of the legal and procedural details of criminal court, and even manages to make the arcane, shady world of foreclosure interesting. While the prose may lack some of the poetic nuance of his early novels, the plot is

worthy of a master storyteller. The film of The Lincoln Lawyer, the first Mickey Haller novel, releases in March. (Apr.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Starred Review Crime-fiction megastar Connelly can always be counted on to try something a little different. In The Reversal (2010), his last Mickey Haller novel, starring the L.A. lawyer who prefers to work out of his Lincoln Town Car, Connelly offered a tour de force of plotting on multiple levels. Here, he narrows the focus considerably, concentrating almost exclusively on what happens inside the courtroom but bringing to the traditional give-and-take of prosecutor, defender, judge, and jury an altogether more complex commingling of personality and legal strategy than is typically on view in legal thrillers. He accomplishes this with a particularly rich first-person narration in which Haller takes us through the courtroom drama as it happens, noting his blunders and praising himself for quick-thinking improvisations. It doesn't hurt, either, that the plot is meaty: a woman whom Haller was representing in a suit against the bank attempting to foreclose on her mortgage is accused of killing the bank official in charge of foreclosures. Combining ripped-from-the-headlines information on the mortgage crisis with a cast of characters that defies stereotypes at every turn of the plot, Connelly shows once again that he will never simply ride the wave of past success. And, neither, apparently, will Mickey Haller, as he reveals a shocking change of direction in the novel's final pages. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Connelly's latest Mickey Haller novel will benefit from the release in March of a movie version of The Lincoln Lawyer, the first Haller novel, starring Matthew McConaughey. 750,000 first printing. --Bill Ott --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Of course it's court drama; it's the Lincoln Lawyer at work. However, The Fifth Witness is different from the other Haller novels, which are often more traditional crime stories. This is actual courtroom stuff, recalling the earlier work of, e.g., Steve Martini. The novel proceeds day by day, witness by witness and focuses on the workings of a defense attorney's mind. The law and legal strategy are the focal points of the novel. Past surveys have shown that there is a disconnect between readers' interests and publishers' offerings. Bottom line: readers love courtroom drama, but there's too little of it out there. There's too little because you need to be able to think like a defense attorney and you need to know the law and the lore to write such a book. Steve Martini's earlier books were fascinating in their exploration of courtroom procedure, even if the writing was not as polished as in the author's later work. Connelly, however, brings his silk-smooth prose along with the courtroom

strategy and lore. The result is something very special (but slightly different from the preceding novels).Connelly began his career as a journalist, but he has been able to immerse himself in the world of the law and The Fifth Witness is the most dramatic result to date. The subject is also current. A woman who was about to lose her house because of her own defaults and the machinations of a sleazy foreclosure company is accused of murdering a bank official. Although she claims to have never actually met him, his blood is on one of her shoes and one of her tools. Mickey thinks she's been framed because, he argues, she is simply too short in height to deliver the blows to the top of the victim's skull which resulted in his death. The prosecutor thinks otherwise and Mickey's ex, Maggie, a prosecutor herself, sympathizes with both. But what will the jury say and will the trial truly bring justice?A thoughtful page-turner; don't miss it. (And don't be put off by the overall evaluation numbers. Those who are giving few stars are often expressing their feelings concerning the price of the electronic version of the novel.)

Good story. Connelly is very good at fleshing out his characters thoroughly and putting together an interesting plot. What strikes me the most about the Lincoln Lawyer series, however, is how flawed our legal system is. Yes, it's better than what a lot of countries have, but that might not be saying a lot. What we have is games between prosecution and defense, much that is relevant that is withheld from the jury for one reason or another, and juries that are expected to decide whether someone is guilty or innocent based on legal posturing and insufficient, sometimes erroneous information. This is, of course, exaggerated in fictional writing but maybe not by much. Bottom line: Enjoy the book but live your life of crime vicariously and steer clear of the law.

In the back of my mind, I was giving Michael Connelly's "The Fifth Witness" a five-star rating as I was reading it. This, to me, was another successful Lincoln Lawyer novel, filled with loops and great courtroom drama. Then I got to the last ten pages. I had to drop two stars. Two things happened at the very conclusion that just did not fit. ****SPOILER ALERT****DO NOT READ FURTHER IF YOU ARE GOING TO READ THIS BOOK!**** First, the killer, for some reason, reveals the truth. Why? I mean, it did not fit the way the killer had been acting before! Second, Michael Haller, telepathically it seems, knows where a dead body is. How? I don't think I missed any clues or anything. If I had, I don't think it was my fault. I hated to change my star value for the book, but the conclusion was just too quick and too out of left field. In fact, it was from another stadium.

I really enjoyed this book as I did the others that I have read, including the Harry Bosch series. I only

have one problem. To this day I don't know what Mickey Haller looks like. In this specific book there is one reference in passing that talks abut his dark looks. What does that mean?Harry Bosch's physical appearance is a mystery. Only in the first books of this series when he was a young man was he described, but from there onwards, he is just a body.Come. Mr Connelly, show your main characters' eyes and faces.

I've been a fan of Michael Connelly for years, both for the Lincoln Lawyer books and for Harry Bosch, their godfather. He not only makes Los Angeles seem attractive, sort of, but he just spins a good yarn. I think sometimes he compresses too far to be believable - here, on the wispiest of evidence, he has the accused dragged from her home, arrested for murder and locked up tight within eight hours of the discovery of the body - don't they have grand juries in California? - but it does get things off to a fast start. The real appeal lies in the twists and turns of the later courtroom exercises. I usually read my mysteries at bedtime - you have to be wide awake for WWII - and I found myself staring in the dark at the ceiling more than once wondering how Mickey Haller, our lawyer, was going to handle this one. I enjoyed the intellectual stretching I had to do. The ending had a twist worth waiting for as well. My only serious gripe stems from the fact that, being part of a series, the book must deal with backstories, which take up time and are really only distracting. Mickey has two(!) ex-wives coming and going here, and most of his staff - he doesn't have just the car - have some personal connections as well, all of which must be recapped. The resulting paragraphs hold things up.

Mickey is temporarily down on his luck working foreclosures when one if his clients is accused of murder. The prosecution and the police rush to judgement. Mickey is convinced there is a sinister element working in the background, specifically when he is savagely beaten. This is a really hard book to put down!

Mickey Halley, the Lincoln Lawyer, kind of grows on a reader. I met him through Harry Bosch and I've enjoyed making his acquaintance. This book was the best yet and they were all good leading to this crescendo. Highly recommended reading! Fast paced, full of twists and turns. Great book!

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