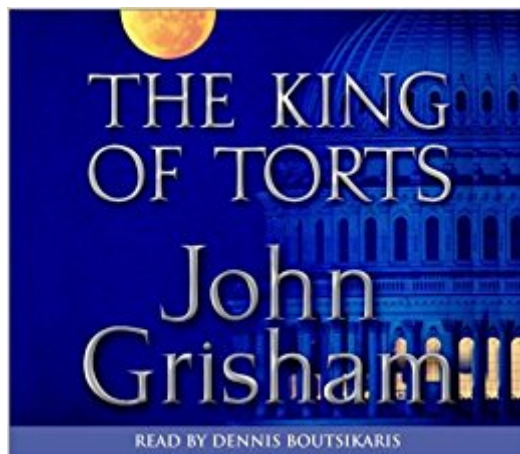


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The King Of Torts



Synopsis

The office of the public defender is not known as a training ground for bright young litigators. Clay Carter has been there too long and, like most of his colleagues, dreams of a better job in a real firm. When he reluctantly takes the case of a young man charged with a random street killing, he assumes it is just another of the many senseless murders that hit D.C. every week. As he digs into the background of his client, Clay stumbles on a conspiracy too horrible to believe. He suddenly finds himself in the middle of a complex case against one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, looking at the kind of enormous settlement that would totally change his life—that would make him, almost overnight, the legal profession's newest king of torts...From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Grisham continues to impress with his daring, venturing out of legal thrillers entirely for *A Painted House* and *Skippering Christmas* (the re-release of which this past fall was itself a bold move) and, within the genre, working major variations. Here's his most unusual legal thriller yet--a story whose hero and villain are the same, a young man with the tragic flaw of greed; a story whose suspense arises not from physical threat but moral turmoil, and one that launches a devastating assault on a group of the author's colleagues within the law. Mass tort lawyers are Grisham's target, the men (they're all men here, at least) who win billion-dollar class-action settlements from corporations selling bad products, then rake fantastic fees off the top, with far smaller payouts going to the

people harmed by the products. Clay Carter is a burning-out lawyer at the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) in Washington, D.C., when he catches the case of a teen who, for no apparent reason, has gunned down an acquaintance. Clay is approached by a mysterious stranger, the enigmatic Max Pace, who says he represents a megacorporation whose bad drug caused the teen--and others--to kill. The corporation will pay Clay \$10 million to settle with all the murder victims at \$5 million per, if all is accomplished on the hush-hush; that way, the corporation avoids trial and possibly much higher jury awards. After briefly examining his conscience, Clay bites. He quits the OPD, sets up his own firm and settles the cases. In reward, Pace gives him a present--a mass tort case based on stolen evidence but worth tens of millions in fees. Clay lunges again, eventually winning over a hundred million in fees. He is crowned by the press the new King of Torts, with enough money to hobnob with the other, venal-hearted tort royalty, to buy a Porsche, a Georgetown townhouse and a private jet, but not enough to forget his heartache over the woman he loves, who dumped him as a loser right before his career took off. Clay's financial/legal hubris knows few bounds, and soon he's overextended, his future hanging on the results of one product liability trial. The tension is considerable throughout, and readers will like the gentle ending, but Grisham's aim here clearly is to educate as he entertains. He can be didactic ("`Nobody earns ten million dollars in six months, Clay,' " a friend warns. "`You might win it, steal it, or have it drop out of the sky, but nobody earns money like that. It's ridiculous and obscene' "), but readers will applaud Grisham's fierce moral stance (while perhaps wondering what sort of advance he got for this book) as they cling to his words every step along the way of this powerful and gripping morality tale. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Rousing . . . Another pedal-to-the-metal crowd-pleaser. " "People "Offers everything one expects from Grisham . . . delivers with a vengeance. " "The Seattle Times "Satisfying . . . a lot of fun . . . When you finish it, you're ready to dash on to the next Grisham. " "Entertainment Weekly " "A thrill ride of twists and turns. " "The Philadelphia Inquirer --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I think John Grisham is one of the best authors ever and most of his books are well-plotted and supremely clever, but this one reads a bit like an airy Mary Higgins-Clark novella. The "hero" isn't

exactly likeable either as he has dubious moral standards (ripping off sick people, driving a firm into foreclosure because he doesn't want to reduce his legal fees etc.), but yet Grisham tries to make him out to be a nice guy, e.g. him still carrying the flame for his former lover (who's not likeable either) and eschewing any money after he'd just lost it all anyway, him giving his former colleagues huge bonuses and so on. This book is more of a sermon on the evils of the American tort system and the love of money, but it still keeps you reading so that you can see him finally get his come-uppance.

John Grisham is a master at the legal thriller. They can have a tendency to sound the same if you run through several of the books one after another because of the similar themes of law and things but they certainly have a fast flowing and dynamic pace. Grisham can draw the reader into the lives of his characters and have them rooting for a protagonist in a hurry. His strength in drawing in the reader is very rare and makes him at the top of the game. The King of Torts makes you root for a young lawyer who much like Icarus flies too close to the sun and is burned but manages to survive.

I divide the book into thirds. The first and last sections were fun to read. The middle section was less so. Although other Grisham books have been more entertaining than The King of Torts, I am left with two impressions. The story gives a glimpse of what it could be like to suddenly "win" an obscene amount of money and blow most of it. And secondly, when all is said and done, what is most important and lasting in life are a few faithful friends and someone to love.

Loved this book! Good surprises. at the turn of events.

I liked the book, gives great insight into the world of tort law and how it really works. I have no doubt that although this book is fiction, it is based on excellent research of how large law firms gain desperate clients in hopes of making tons of money. I was disappointed at the ending but it was similar to all of Grisham's conclusions.....the protagonist (s) merely disappear and sail into the sunset , superficially unscathed by their story.

This was a true lesson in the way things are in America today. The gree get got regardless of their good intentions from the start.

You look at the peak of a mountain and decide climbing to the top is easy to do. When you reach

your goal there is a long climb back to safety. A good adventure? Or, or the wrong goal.

Gresham does it again. Insightful analyzing lawyers who, in the struggle to get ahead, succumb to the lure of easy riches, he weaves a gallant tale of greed. Then the greed overtakes caution, leading to a disastrous finish. A well-written, interesting plot utilizing an untried scenario of lawyers who get a real lesson in mortality.

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