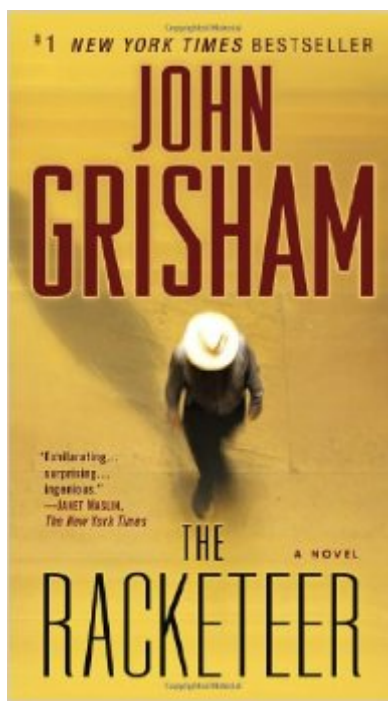


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# The Racketeer: A Novel



## Synopsis

“The Racketeer is guilty of only one thing: keeping us engaged until the very last page.” —USA Today #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

In the history of the United States, only four active federal judges have been murdered. Judge Raymond Fawcett has just become number five. His body is found in his remote lakeside cabin. There is no sign of forced entry or struggle. Just two dead bodies: Judge Fawcett and his young secretary. And one large, state-of-the-art, extremely secure safe, opened and emptied.

One man, a former attorney, knows who killed Judge Fawcett, and why. But that man, Malcolm Bannister, is currently residing in the Federal Prison Camp near Frostburg, Maryland. Though serving time, Malcolm has an ace up his sleeve. He has information the FBI would love to know. Malcolm would love to tell them. But everything has a price—and the man known as the Racketeer wasn't born yesterday.

Praise for *The Racketeer*

“Exhilarating . . . surprising . . . ingenious.” —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

“A satisfying, deeply engrossing thriller in which different forms of justice are ultimately served.” —*The Washington Post*

“Fast-paced . . . with enough startling plot twists” and changes of scenery, from Miami to Montego Bay and beyond “to surprise even the most suspicious reader.” —*The Wall Street Journal*

“Tautly plotted.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (10,563 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,318 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Legal](#) #185 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Spies & Politics > Political](#) #359 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Crime > Murder](#)

## Customer Reviews

I'm writing this bc I haven't bought a Grisham book that wasn't deeply discounted or free in YEARS. I bought this book after the NYT review-- I think it's the first decent review of a Grisham book in a

long time (last I remember). I have been on and off again about Grisham's books, (mostly off for a long time) honestly nothing for me will be as good as *A Time To Kill*, or *The Chamber*, or as fun as *The Firm*-- but I have read most of what he's written-- and mostly been "eh" about Grisham for several years. Ok having said that-- as the title of my review states, this is a book you absolutely have to suspend disbelief-- especially if you are even remotely associated with the legal profession and if you're a lawyer - (actually even if you aren't) you will roll your eyes at some points-- but you WILL CONTINUE reading, because, as preposterous as some of the plot turns are, you will want to see where he goes with this. The main character stays in kind of a 'foreshadowing" mode throughout the story- you kind of think and sometimes know where this is going but because the main character is also 'unreliable' - you are left unsure-- so as a reader you wonder if the narrator/main character plots against his 'foes' while simultaneously doing the same to the you (the reader) --- I did think that was pretty interesting on Grisham's part. I can't explain this anymore without spoilers. FYI-- The NYT review was bizarre-- some parts of the review made no sense after I finished the book--and I re-read the review-- this line in particular referring to the main character-- "And Mal happens to be black. That fact seems to have nothing to do with the book until Mr. Grisham makes shrewd use of race later on. " --- what?

John Grisham's work runs the gambit. Some serious, some funny, some nostalgic, and some sporty. But no matter what you know you're in for a good read. This one is no different. 'The Racketeer' falls somewhere between the seriousness of 'The Confession' and the fun of 'The Litigators'. Our friend, Malcolm Bannister, is a lawyer who is in jail (I'll pause for your jokes here) for a crime he didn't commit. (Another pause). Fortunately for him the unfortunate demise of a Federal judge and his lady (hot, young, sexy, hot, you get the picture) friend is his key for early release. No clues, no witnesses, no leads, and no evidence. These frivolous minor details don't bother the FBI and they don't really bother Malcolm. He knows the truth and the Feds will pay dearly for it. Of course when dealing with the Feds and a jailed lawyer, "truth" is more of a mythological punchline than anything else. While 'The Racketeer' is a fast read make yourself slow down, especially near the end. There are many pieces to this puzzle and you'll miss it if you read at the speed in which John writes. I mentioned earlier that our boy Malcolm goes through some pretty extraordinary lengths to get what he wants and that IS NOT an exaggeration. But then the question we must ask ourselves is; what is the price of freedom? What would you pay for or suffer through just for the chance to be free? You're about to find out. Oh... and what if that taste of freedom was seasoned with a bit of revenge? Malcolm has people to pay back, but before he does that he must deal with

this little issue of piecing together a plan with more moving parts than the space shuttle and a failure rate of my high school algebra class. Will it work? Well that depends on your working definition of "work".

What you'll get in this one: the snappy characterizations and plot twists that make Grisham's legal thrillers so irresistible to his loyal fans. I received my book in the wee hours of release day, and stayed up reading the entire novel. It was too good to put down. Grisham wisely keeps readers guessing about how lawyer Malcolm Bannister may pull off a revenge scheme. I was hooked as soon as I grasped the basic plot. But this doesn't mean *The Racketeer* is flawless.. It took awhile for me to become fully engaged with the book -- mainly because Grisham took his time revealing crucial details and spent awhile describing prison life. Some of that is interesting and adds depth. But parts of the novel lagged for me. *The Racketeer* starts off with lawyer Malcolm Bannister describing his basic situation: he has been sent to prison for 10 years based on a sentence "handed down by a weak and sanctimonious federal judge in Washington, DC". I'm not giving away anything here because that info is revealed on the first page of my edition of this book (Kindle). Bannister has tried every appeal available. His wife, initially supportive, has left him. He misses his son. In short, his life is grim and depressing. Bannister can't imagine being incarcerated for 10 years, and he is desperate to get out. The reason he is in jail constitutes "a long story." but he is convinced he has been convicted of a crime he had "no knowledge of committing" (he does, however, admit to naivete' and stupidity which helped lead to his downfall). The rest of the details in the early half of *The Racketeer* mainly involved Bannister's carefully constructed plan to get out of prison, starting with info he knows about the murder of federal judge Raymond Fawcett.

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