



The Price of Justice

Marti Green

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Seven years ago, Winston Melton was on top of the world: a privileged kid fresh off his first semester at Princeton. Life was perfect—until he was accused of the rape and murder of an ex-girlfriend. Years after his conviction, another death-row inmate has come forward with an eleventh-hour confession, casting Win's conviction in a new light. But with the ink drying on his death sentence, time is running short.

Win's grandmother, the family matriarch, has her eyes set on one of the Help Innocent Prisoners Project's defense lawyers: Dani Trumball, and her reputation for results, no matter the cost. Dani, concerned she is being bought, initially refuses but eventually takes the case.

Soon, Dani can sense that something's off, both with Win's conviction and the new confession. But seven years after the incident, is there still a chance of uncovering the truth?

The Price of Justice Details

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From Reader Review The Price of Justice for online ebook

Robin says

The Help Innocent Prisoners Project (HIPP) receives hundreds of letters each year from prisoners claiming they are not guilty. Attorney Danni Trumball sifts through the mail, finding cases their group may be able to look into. But their next request doesn't come through the mail at all. Dannie receives a phone call from Amelia Melton, the rich matriarch of the Melton family. Amelia's grandson, Winston, is sitting on death row, convicted of the death of his ex-girlfriend seven years ago. Time is running out for him. Danni doesn't like the rich Melton's hiring HIPP to help overturn Win's sentence. They can afford a room full of lawyers if they want to spend the money. She also questions the fact that another death row prisoner has confessed to the seven-year-old murder. It just seems too convenient.

The third book in the Danni Trumball series is a solid mystery. I thought this one was a little too easy to figure out, but the ending was entertaining. My rating: 3.5 Stars.

Helen says

This is the first book that i have read by Marti Green but it won't be the last. The first chapter started a little tamely and the writing felt a bit disjointed but once into the main story that vanished. The author obviously knows a lot about the law and really draws the reader into the different aspects of it and the horrors of those on death row or imprisoned without the ability to pay for proper counsel so that their cases are heard fairly and without prejudice. I was granted a copy of this from Netgalley for an unbiased review ... the story itself is not going to be much of a "whodunnit" for most hungry crime and thriller readers however that aside the story alone is worth the read.

Kati says

I didn't care one way or the other about these characters. 2 things that really stuck out to me were that the main character, Dani, seemed suuuuper self conscious about the "extra 10 pounds on her frame" which was mentioned multiple times. It just seemed really shallow and not at all relevant?

The second thing that bothered me was on multiple occasions, characters wondered why this handsome young man would "need" to rape a girl that was interested in him and had had sex with him in the past. It would be one thing if this flawed thinking was resolved later in the book, but it never is. These are law enforcement officers and a lawyer so I have to assume the author does not understand that's not how rape works either. It just really bothered me so I couldn't get into the book

Jen says

Maybe three and a half stars.

Dani Trumball, a lawyer for an agency that seeks to help prisoners who have been incarcerated for crimes

they claim they did not commit. The main criterion for their aid is that the men or women they help are too poor to have had adequate legal representation at their trials.

Amelia Melton requests that Dani take on the case of her grandson Winston Melton, a young man convicted of rape and murder. Win has been in prison and on death row for seven years; his death warrant has been signed, and he has 180 days left until his execution.

Dani initially refuses. The Melton's are billionaires; they have had the best representation available. Dani believes the calling of the agency (and her personal calling) is to seek justice for those who haven't been able to afford the kind of help they needed. She resents the idea that the Melton's money can commandeer her services.

Eventually, however reluctantly, the agency takes the case, and as requested by Amelia Melton, Dani and her team must take the lead.

Dani isn't comfortable with the case--not with the original conviction, not with the last minute confession by Earl Sanders that he, not Win, committed the murder, not with the idea that the Melton's money may have bought the confession. Even when she believes Win Melton, who still maintains his innocence, several things about the case bother her.

Several twists and turns keep the novel interesting as Dani's team work to discover what really happened seven years ago.

Read in June; blog post scheduled for July 10, 2015.

NetGalley/Thomas & Mercer

Mystery/Legal Thriller. July 21, 2015. Print length: 271 pages.

CL says

I would love to see more books with the Dani Trumbull character. She fights the good fight for prisoners who have been wrongly convicted and cannot afford high priced lawyers to help fight the system. That is why when a member of the wealthy Melton family tries to buy her assistance to get her grandson off death row it goes against all she believes in. As more and more details come to light it seems all too easy and obstacles that were once in her way seem to be easily overcome as she fights to get Winston Melton off death row and out of prison. Dani knows that something is not quite right but now that she has gotten Winston Melton out of jail she can't help but think there is more going on. She will not rest until she has uncovered the truth no matter the cost.

Joanne Robertson says

This book is the 3rd in the series that Marti Green has written about Dani Trumbull and her work at HIPP (Help innocent prisoners project) where Dani works to help clear people in prison who she thinks are innocent of the crime of which they have been convicted. This novel can be read as a standalone though so

don't worry if you have not read the other two.

Winston is on death row convicted of the rape and murder of his ex girlfriend Carly. His grandmother Amelia, a rich matriarch, approaches HIPP asking for their help. A confession from another death row prisoner seems to clear Win but the case is not as clear cut as Dani would like and Tommy the investigator is put to work.

The first in the series remains my favourite (a heart rending Unintended Consequences) but this was a well written legal thriller where the author obviously knows her stuff! I did work out what had really happened quite early on in the book but that didn't spoil my enjoyment. I like Dani and hope we get to meet her in another HIPP case again soon.

I received a copy of this book via netgalley in return for an unbiased review.

Rosie says

Seven years ago Winston Melton was convicted and sentenced to death row for the murder and rape of Carly Sobel. Seven years later, a fellow prisoner on death row has confessed to the crime. Amelia Melton, who is Winston's grandmother and a very rich and influential stateswoman, approaches Dani Trumbull a New York lawyer for the Help Innocent Prisoners Project (HIPP) to have Win's conviction and death sentence overturned. Dani is initially reluctant and not convinced that Winston is truly innocent, however with the help of her team, Tommy and Melanie, they investigate and work together on Win's case. However, all is not as it appears to be on the surface and Dani and her team end up uncovering a lot more than they bargained for with the case.

This is apparently the third novel in the Innocent Prisoners Project series by Marti Green, but the first one I had read. I did not find that I needed to have read the first two to keep up with the story and characters in this one. There were a few explanations around how the US legal system works as well as the death penalty. Having an interest in law, and not being from the US, I really appreciated these details being included. I learnt about the death penalty, false convictions and also about the unreliability of eyewitness testimony. I really liked Dani as the lead character, and felt she was a strong and ethical woman.

There were some aspects that I did not like as much. At the beginning, I was uncertain with the way the dialogue was written. I cannot really put my finger on why and I struggled to fully engage with the story until about a third of the way through. I did get used to Marti Green's writing style and from that point on I read it quite quickly. The only other issue I had was that I felt toward the end of the novel the story lost some believability as I found it a little bit far fetched.

Overall, I did enjoy the story. It was a mix between a courtroom drama and a mystery novel. I would recommend to people who have an interest in the law and especially the death penalty.

Thank you to net galley for providing me with a copy of this book.

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

Only one star for this, the third in the Innocent prisoners series.

Winston Melton was a privileged young man, a freshman at Princeton. Life was perfect—until he was accused then convicted of the rape and murder of an ex-girlfriend. Seven years later, all appeals exhausted,

and on death row awaiting his execution, his guilt is thrown into doubt when another death-row inmate comes forward with a confession. But for reasons know only to them the state is reluctant to re-examine Win's case.

Win's grandmother, the family matriarch makes Dani Trumball, one of the Help Innocent Prisoners Project's defense lawyers, an offer she can't refuse, and with time running short, Dani has to work to prove Win's innocence.

What did I like about this book? Not a great deal. The writing was flat, without emotion. Reading it was a little like reading a trial transcript. The characters were shallow and one dimensional. There was no suspense, no drama. Several times I was tempted to abandon this book. Perhaps I should have.

I don't honestly believe that reading the earlier books in the series would make any difference to the way I felt about The Price of Justice.

Thank you to NetGalley and Amazon Publishing for a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Ines says

Bleh.

David says

This is the third book in a series, but it could just as easily be the first, since all the characters are fairly cardboard and the premise is spelled out in the beginning.

Dani Trumball is a former DA who works for an organization called the Help Innocent Prisoners Project. They take clients who are on death row but may be innocent, generally clients who were badly represented the first time. This much is realistic, though Dani spends a lot of time insisting that she can only defend someone whom she really believes is innocent, which is not really a defense attorney's job. Yes, it's nice when they believe their client is innocent, but their job is to make sure their client gets a fair trial and that the state follows due process and does not violate anyone's rights. Even as a non-lawyer, I know that most legal shows and public opinion get this wrong, and it's what a lot of people have a problem with, the fact that it's often not the truth of guilt or innocence that matters.

Dani's organization is approached by the matriarch of an obscenely rich family, whose grandson was convicted of the rape and murder of his ex-girlfriend seven years ago, and is now about to be executed. Dani is reluctant to take the case, since their organization usually represents those too poor to hire their own lawyers, and it's not clear why the Meltons would want her help. But they offer to make a huge donation, and an even larger one if Dani gets Win Melton off of death row, so Dani, despite misgivings, takes the kid's case.

Inasmuch as there might be any mystery as to whether Win actually did it, this is dispelled early on as the author writes in an annoying omniscient multiple-POV fashion that puts us inside Win's head, inside the

head of the serial killer who confesses to the crime that Win is on death row, and inside the heads of everyone else Dani meets.

Dani is naturally suspicious that a convicted rapist-murderer who's also about to be executed conveniently confesses to Win's crime. They do some checking to see if Dani's grandmother paid him or his family to take the fall, but don't turn up anything. The first half of the book is the legal maneuvering which leads to an unsurprising result, although at several points there were some items that stretched my suspension of disbelief, with my limited understanding of the law.

Then, of course, Dani finds out that the Meltons **did** meddle with witnesses, and she has to find out the Truth. The rest of the book is a plodding investigation to uncover the real killer.

While the plot was interesting enough and I was hooked by the premise, I really wasn't impressed either by the execution or by the author's writing, which is a textbook example of telling rather than showing. We're told what characters think, we're told what they do, we're told what they did, we're told what they feel, and all of this telling substitutes for actual characterization. Likewise, there isn't much tension in any of the revelations because everything is telegraphed. I thought the story was okay but the writing was rather amateurish and reminded me more of a debut novel than the third book in a series, so this rating is really more like 2.5 stars, which I'm bumping to 3 because I was interested enough to follow along to the end.

Tulay says

Good legal thriller.

Very rich Win, just home from Princeton arrested for raping and murdering his ex-girlfriend. Family matriarch grandmother determined to prove he is innocent. Win has been in the death row for seven years, HIPPP; Help Innocent Prisoners Project promised donation of one million dollars to prove his innocence. Lawyers are desperate for the money takes the case. Lawyers and investigator goes to work. Author gives great description of all the characters. Like always money talks, grandmother says "everybody has a price." Judges and governor in this case bought. Long twists kept me listening. Book was free with audio.

Jennifer Meierotto says

While I enjoy the stories about Dani Trumbull and the HIPPP, this book was just ok. It seemed bloated with some details that were unnecessary and with a level of predictability. I think what I found the most interesting was the author's descriptions of different characters by their weight. As in, "she appeared 10lbs overweight," etc. It didn't paint a picture for me, but instead made me wonder why the person writing was so interested in the character's weight. I also understand that the main character's son has a form of retardation after reading the other books in the series and it gets a to be repetitive. I just didn't enjoy this book as much as the previous ones in the series.

?Susan? says

A young man is sent to jail for a crime he says he did not commit. His family is wealthy and have many

politicians, judges etc., in their back pocket, however, not the right people at the time of his conviction. When an attorney who represents people on death row receives a confession from another inmate for the young mans crime, she reopens the case. The writing and story were good but a bit predictable. This is a middle of the road crime thriller, not too heavy but not a cozy either.

Dana says

This is the 3rd "Help Innocent Prisoners Project" book by Marti Green, and I've now enjoyed all three. In each book, Dani Trumball attempts to legally free prisoners who she believes have been wrongly imprisoned. In most cases, the key to getting free is DNA tests which weren't available when they were convicted. And, in most cases, the prisoner is on death row.

Winston Melton grew up as a wealthy, privileged child and then went to Princeton. While home on break after his first semester, he is arrested for the rape and murder of his ex-girlfriend. That was seven years ago. Now, the countdown has begun for his execution. But, he still insists he's innocent.

Dani Trumball isn't so sure. And, the whole goal of their project is to help those who can't afford it. But, with their law office in desperate need of money, pressure is put on her to take the case... and the million dollars offered by Winston's grandmother.

Judy Collins says

A special thank you to Thomas & Mercer and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review. 4.5 Stars

Marti Green returns with popular *Help Innocent Prisoners Project*, (HIPP) with her third and most riveting installment in the series--**THE PRICE OF JUSTICE**, when justice comes with a hefty price; sacrifices made, and a race against time with an execution countdown, in this complex multi-layered suspense legal crime thriller.

Having read the two other books in the series, was so excited to discover what case Dani Trumball, and the HIPP team in New York would be involved in this time around. This is the most complex case yet, which will keep you on the edge of your seat guessing, as to the identity of the real killer.

This request for legal representation is quite different than their normal cases at HIPP. Since the organization is a non-profit, helping innocent prisoners, normally their clients have no other financial means for legal counsel. Their mission is to help free as many innocent men and women as they can. However, without funds they will have to let go of staff and that will dramatically reduce the number of people they can help.

When Amelia Melton, one of the richest and most power grandmother, matriarch comes flying in their humble office, the elderly woman wants Dani to save her grandson, who is serving on death row and days from execution. She can afford the best attorneys money can buy. However, she has long given up on them, and aware HIPP operates on donations.

Her proposal is for Dani to take her grandson, Winston's case and she will donate \$500,000 to the organization. Win it, and she will donate an additional \$500,000, plus expenses. She wants an answer in two days, as there is no time to spare.

Ms. Melton is doing the bidding, and taking control. The parents fell apart when their son was first arrested, and they believe in him; however, they are worn down. It is up to the grandmother to take charge of his future. Dani's first reaction is to say no; however, there are many innocent impoverished men and women they can help with this money. Bruce and the board agree, they have to help.

However, first Dani wants to visit Winston, and ensure he is really innocent. That is all they need, to help a guilty man go free, no matter who his family is. Of course, with state and federal budget cuts, grants, and contributions which have recently been cut in half and the economy, organizations such as theirs are suffering.

The attorneys handling the original rape case, say Winston was an arrogant, cocky rich kid and the judges and system wanted to make an example of this family. How would it look if the courts showed favoritism to a rich and connected family?

The Meltons are wealthy with a home in Manhattan, and a winter home in Palm Beach. The rape occurred years ago with a high school student and the body was found behind Palm Beach High School. Melton at the time was a freshman at Princeton University and was at his family's home visiting for semester break. He girl had been raped and killed and the cause of death was strangulation. No DNA was recovered from her body, but a strand of hair identified as belonging to the defendant was discovered near the body. They had dated prior to this and he had broken off the relationship prior to college.

When they visit Winston in prison, he appears to be innocent and very humble. His grandmother will stop at nothing to free her grandson. Then only days before another execution of a criminal, another death row prisoner confesses to the rape. He knows too many details. But why is he confessing now? Has the grandmother paid someone to take the fall, which will be executed in a few days regardless?

They have to find out if this guy's family has received any large sums of money? Was the other guy the real killer, and if not, who is the real killer? He could still be out there? In the meantime, could Winston really be guilty and fooling everyone?

Dani and her team will need to work quickly, as the death warrant has already been signed, HIPP has less than six months to try and clear him. Their whole purpose is representing inmates they believe have been unfairly convicted. They do not take cases unless they believe the person isn't guilty. Unlike other attorneys it is not always of importance. Of course someone else confessed, but what if they investigate and he didn't do it? Does the board expect them to represent him, anyway? What about double jeopardy for Winston--if he gets free, he cannot be tried again for the same crime?

Not only do they have to try and reverse the decision, they also have to begin their own investigation to clear their own suspicions, and look at anyone else who may be connected to the crime. From Winston's friends, ex-girlfriends, and the victim's friends, from back seven years earlier.

The suspense builds, when you suspect the grandmother buying off everyone, then is Winston really innocent, what about the person who confessed—how did he know details? Then there is another big twist which will leave your head spinning until it comes down to the wire.

Love Florida authors, and really enjoy them if they write legal thrillers. Green does an excellent job, with her legal facts, practicing attorney and residing in Central Florida. The interesting twist was the obstacle with Florida law. It's the only state in which only seven of twelve jurors need to agree to impose the death penalty, instead of unanimous.

In summary, thanks Marti, for featuring Palm Beach County, my home for the last eight years! As always, another terrific suspense in this awesome series. Love the characters, and always a different case with new twists. Cannot wait to see what is next in the series. Keep them coming!

A huge fan of legal series, and even more so when combined with the personal lives, strong women, and those who enjoy helping those in need. Each can be read as a standalone; however, would recommend reading them all!

Unintended Consequences #1

Presumption of Guilt #2

If you enjoy this type of legal suspense crime thriller—helping the underdog and the innocent; also highly recommend, *Sylvie Fox's* A Casey Cort Series. The author is a former trial attorney, and she is full of wit! Both these series are top notch, and feature some strong intelligent women attorneys, fighting for justice to defend the less fortunate.

Qualified Immunity #1

Under Color of Law #2

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