



Frame Up

John F. Dobbyn

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After graduating from Harvard Law with his closest friend John McKedrick, Michael Knight takes a job with his mentor, legendary trial attorney Lex Devlin, while John becomes sole associate of a notorious mob lawyer. Michael never lost hope that John McKedrick would escape to cleaner pastures -until John is murdered in a car bombing bearing the signature of his questionable clientele. How could two friends who were so close have taken such wildly divergent paths? In the wake of McKedrick's murder, three men who took their own deviating paths will meet for the first time in forty years. Matt Ryan, a priest, Dominic Santangelo, a mafia don, and Lex Devlin put the past aside to focus on a present concern: Dominic's son has been charged with John McKedrick's murder. At Lex's urging, Michael Knight reluctantly agrees to represent the alleged bomber. In building a defense, Michael is drawn into a high-stakes art fraud that leads him from the seediest parts of Boston to the sophisticated Amsterdam inner sanctum of international crime.

Frame Up Details

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From Reader Review Frame Up for online ebook

Darcy Odden says

Friendship and the life choices we make are the basis for John F. Dobbyn's "Frame Up." Boston lawyers John McKedrick and Michael Knight have been best friends since childhood, yet John chooses to defend clients with ties to the mob while Michael is a straight-arrow lawyer working for legendary attorney Lex Devlin, his mentor.

John is killed and Michael seriously injured in a car bombing of dubious origins. Mob boss Dominic Santangelo's son is charged with John's murder and he wants Lex to defend his son. Friendship again comes into play here as Dominic and Lex were close friends as young men, along with Matt Ryan, former fighter turned priest.

But the story centers on Michael, out to find John's killer. His unlawyer-like efforts lead him to discover John's involvement in an art fraud of international proportions all while dodging several attempts on his own life.

Dobbyn has created a cast of engaging characters in this crime thriller. Michael is a worthy hero and readers will be rooting for him. The fast-paced mystery offers a bit of romance, too. I thoroughly enjoyed Dobbyn's "Frame Up" and hope to read more of Michael Knight's escapades. I would recommend this book to all mystery lovers.

Evelyn says

Attorney Michael Knight investigates the death of his best friend John McKedrick which involves him with the Boston Mob and Russian Mafia. To stay alive and free his client Michael must play both sides against each other.

This is the second book in the series featuring Michael Knight and his mentor/partner Lex Devlin but can stand alone. Michael is an interesting hero you'll want to root for.

Miriam says

I like the characters of decline and knight, but the situations in this novel are so outlandish and so improbable, that reading to the end is difficult. A small-time attorney in a new partnership with a more established jurist takes on both the Boston Italian mafia and the Russian mafia in the same book -- and lives to tell about it. Just too far-fetched to be a truly good read.

Cathy Sikorski says

I love Michael Knight and Lex Devlin. All these books by John Dobbyn move fast, keep you on the edge of

your seat, give you a chuckle and twist and turn so that they keep you guessing. I love murder mysteries, I love recurring characters, and as a lawyer, I love to find lawyers to love (a difficult task at best!)

Pam says

This was a great book! I got it as a freebie on Amazon, so didn't have very high expectations. However, I found the story rather gripping and I didn't find it to be very predictable. It was "clean" and well-written for the most part.

Janice says

In Frame Up former professor of law, author John F. Dobbyn shows his understanding of lawyers. His main character, Michael Knight is thrown into danger when he is hurt at a car bombing but his best friend John McKedrick, a lawyer is murdered. Michael was in law school with John and is now a law partner with Lex Devlin who is like a father to him. They are both thrown into solving John's murder when Devlin's childhood friends, Matt Ryan, now a priest and Dominic Santangelo, who became a Mafia con, ask for a meeting. Santangelo's son, Peter has been charged with John's death. Reluctantly, Devlin agrees to represent Peter though he sets clear boundaries with Santangelo. Little do Devlin and Michael know what is ahead.

Michael becomes more involved with other members of the Mafia and John's girlfriend as he tries to unravel the truth behind John's murder. He knew John had been involved with a seedy man but he had no idea how dangerous it would become. Michael finds out this murder has ramifications not just in Boston but there are international connections.

This mystery keeps you guessing as Michael tries to unravel what really happened to his friend and gets sucked into the world of priceless art. Along the way he encounters many thugs, his old art history professor, and a Russian Mafia leader. Devlin continually gives him counsel to stay out of it but Michael just jumps in further. He thinks quickly on his feet and is not afraid to get to the truth even when he faces danger. He is likeable and I was rooting for him the entire time. This book is definitely a page turner reminding me of John Grisham's legal thrillers and Robert Ludlum's international crime thrillers. I highly recommend it and would love it if Dobbyn would write more books about Michael Knight.

Patti says

Every once in a while, you need a page-turning mystery with a traditional feel. I inhaled this in 2 days, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Only quibble is the unlimited funds the law firm seems to have.

Recommended.

Jakenv says

This mystery moves along at a rapid pace. Be prepared for an adventure filled with twists turns which keep you guessing at each juncture. This is a must read for anyone who enjoys a good thriller. More than enough plot lines for any avid reader.

Won as e-book from author whom I wish to thank for an incredible read.

Lyn says

Friends Michael Knight and John McKedrick take diverging career paths after graduating from Harvard Law School. Michael practices with the U.S. Attorney's office and is later mentored by Lex Devlin at his prestigious trial law firm. John, equally gifted, becomes an attorney for the Mob, under another famous lawyer, Benny Ignola. Michael never stops hoping that John will reconsider his life choices and join a reputable law firm.

Seven years later, Michael watches as his friend is blown to bits by a car bomb. Michael is injured from his proximity to the car and spends the next two and a half days unconscious. He awakens in time for John's funeral.

The police charge Peter Santangelo, the son of a Mafia boss, with planting the bomb that led to John's death. Later, at Lex Devlin's request, Michael agrees to defend Peter. Lex grew up with Peter's father. Once Michael agrees, he throws himself into unraveling the mystery that surrounds the case. Initiated in Boston, Michael's quest for answers takes him to England and Amsterdam. The murder may be the result of an international conspiracy.

The hold that friendships have on individuals - despite years and different lifestyles - runs through this story. Michael is a likable hero and Frame Up is hard to put down.

Sahar Sabati says

As long-time readers know, a book is definitely a great way to relax, but it doesn't mean that the book itself has to be so dull and watered down that it literally relaxes you into a nap (that's what law textbooks are for). It takes skill for a writer to perfect the blend of accessibility (which will prevent the reader from becoming discouraged and never finishing the book) and intrigue that will keep the reader guessing until the very end, his neurons palpitating while his frame relaxes into a comfortable sofa.

It's a skill that John F. Dobbyn demonstrates in his new book, Frame-up. From the very first page, this legal thriller drags the reader into a world of lawyers and their mob-linked clients and keeps him there until the very last of its 278 pages.

Michael Knight of Devlin & Knight is a young criminal defense lawyer. His best friend, John McKedrick, is murdered in a car bombing that bears the signature of the mob. It seems like John McKedrick's career path, meant to fast-track him to success, did anything but.

Michael's partner and mentor, Mr. Devlin, becomes involved when the son of his childhood friend becomes accused of the murder. But Dominic Santangelo knows his son Peter had nothing to do with John McKedrick's murder, and seeks legal council from Michael & Mr. Devlin. And the games begin – all this in the first twenty pages of *Frame-up*. And from then on, the action rarely (if ever) lets go.

John F. Dobbyn is as relentless an author as Michael Knight is relentless as a lawyer. The story grabbed me from the very first page and kept me guessing until the very end. There were some parts that were a little obvious, and others that seemed a little cliché, but it all made for a very realistic story; after all, life itself can be both quite obvious at time and quite cliché at others.

Frame-up (published by Oceanview Publishing) can be a little challenging to read at times. John F. Dobbyn writes in the language of those in know; so while the book is well-written, it can be something of a challenge for those who are either not lawyers or who are not in the habit of reading legal thrillers. It isn't a surprise, since John F. Dobbyn is actually Professor Dobbyn of the Villanova Law School (since 1969). And while this can make for a challenging read, it ultimately adds to the story by delightfully stimulating one's neurons – especially if you are reading in bed after a long, tough day.

Another added bonus is the couple of sections that will make you pause to reflect. For those of you who have been reading my reviews and blogs for the last couple of years, you won't be surprised that I considered this an added and much appreciated bonus to *Frame-up* that I particularly enjoyed.

One section in particular stood out to me. In it, Dominic Santangelo, the don, is defending his actions by contrasting his pursuit of justice by the sometimes very inefficient pursuit of the same objective by Michael and Mr. Devlin in their chosen profession: "Michael, you and I and your partner, my old friend, are all from different heritages. Yes, I have power. I use the power to produce justice as I see it. Which of us is right? (...) Which power, mine or yours, produced justice?" Michael doesn't say anything to this, but his thoughts are full: "I considered making the case for a democratic republic over a self-justifying tyrant whose every unquestioned whim was enforced in blood. I considered asking the don how many times he had used that power of violence for personal profit as opposed to unselfish justice. I also considered the futility of trying to convince this little Caesar that he somehow fell short of Solomon judging the Israelites. I vetoed all of it. There was no point in turning a very dicey moment into a high school civics class."

The best part of this is that John F. Dobbyn didn't make a huge deal out of the debate. He didn't make his characters go on and on about it. Rather, he placed this nugget of information close enough to the beginning of the book (on page 55) that it's specter floated throughout the entire book (in a good way, of course). It was a not so subtle but very well done way of infusing the story with meaning.

Frame-up is a great book to pick up if you are in for a relaxing yet interesting read. I would suggest taking it on a flight, as you will probably become so engrossed with it that you will not notice the various necessary annoyances air travel involves nowadays. By the same token, reading this book on your commute might not be the best of ideas, unless you live at the last stop, ensuring that you won't miss it, thus cursing both John F. Dobbyn for writing it and myself for recommending it.

(First published on Blogcritics and <http://saharsreviews.wordpress.com>)

Jean says

Michael Knight's best friend, John McKedrick, is murdered and the story begins. Michael is a trial attorney with legendary Lex Devlin. A Boston mafia don's son, Peter, is charged with John's death. Lex and Michael are hired to defend Peter. Michael is drawn into a high stakes art fraud taking him into the inner sanctum of international crime. You want to keep reading this book to learn of the surprising ending.

Debbi Mack says

In FRAME-UP, we meet a formidable young, Boston-based lawyer Michael Knight and his mentor/partner Lex Devlin. The story opens with Knight recovering in a hospital following an explosion, in which an old friend, John McKedrick, has been killed. The explosion sets off a chain of events that leads Knight into danger.

Turns out Devlin has old ties from childhood with a crime kingpin who Knight couldn't have imagined his mentor being associated with. The kingpin's son is accused of arranging the explosion and resulting murder – however, he claims he's being framed. Knight's job is to represent the son. He already knows that McKedrick wasn't a complete innocent, either, since he'd been legal counsel for shady characters himself.

The story takes you through Knight's quest for information that'll exonerate his client – taking the reader through a convoluted set of events that keeps one guessing.

Meanwhile, as Knight works out the machinations of Boston's Mob politics, complications involving a stolen Vermeer painting are playing out in Europe. These complications involve a rather intimidating and powerful man, known only as "the gentleman" – someone who inspires enough fear and loathing among the players to belie his nickname.

The story is told mostly from Knight's first person perspective, but switches gears about halfway through, so the reader sees events in Europe from another point of view (and in third person). This technique builds tension and creates anticipation of how the European connection fits into the larger picture.

Knight also grows close to one of McKedrick's friends – a charming young woman, who Knight worries may have been in love with McKedrick. The relationship creates a nice romantic subplot that gets woven well into the main story.

John F. Dobbyn has created in Knight a lawyer who's intrepid, without being foolish. Knight has ethical and moral standards and he tries to do the right thing, while representing people he might not like personally – making him both adventurous and a consummate legal professional. Dobbyn does a masterful job of balancing these attributes – it's not an easy feat to make a lawyer's job look as exciting as depicted here, without going way over the top.

Read the entire review here: <http://thriller-fiction.suite101.com/...>

Patricia says

Michael Knight and John McKedrick were good friends when both attended Harvard Law School and remained good friends although their lives took them in different directions. Michael became a partner in a

respectable law firm run by Lex Devlin. Michael had the utmost respect for Devlin and Devlin has deep affection for Michael. John took a position with an attorney who is known for his mob affiliations.

As Michael was leaving the office one evening to meet John for dinner, John's car blew up just as Michael approached. Michael survived but John is killed. An informant told the police that Peter Santangelo is the person that set the bomb. Peter is the son of Dominic Santangelo, a well-known mafia figure.

Michael is shocked when Devlin requests his presence at a meeting of Devlin's friends from long ago. The meeting takes place in a church with Monsignor Ryan and Dominic Santangelo. Santangelo has arranged the meeting to request that Devlin represent his son Peter, Godson of Lex Devlin.

Devlin finally agrees and Michael plunges head first into an investigation that will take him from Boston to London to Amsterdam and involve him not only with the American mafia but also with the Russian mafia. Michael manages to conduct a sting operation that ultimately uncovers many truths and saves more than one life.

Frame Up is described as a legal thriller but the action is all outside of the courtroom. For a lot of action and some interesting maneuvers, this is the book to read.

Deborah aka Reading Mom says

Very nice series--my only complaint is that spelling and grammar could be better edited. Interesting reads if you like legal thrillers. This is the second in the series, but they could all be read as stand-alones

Susan says

This book had a lot of potential despite it's rather overly self-confident protagonist. However, the plot has a few too many twists as it takes us from a mob hit in Boston to an art fraud in Amsterdam with a couple of Russians thrown in. Sometimes it was hard to track all the characters. I hear the author speak at a local library about the research behind his most recent book and the talk was fascinating, so I may give him another try.
