



BOOK REVIEW- JOHN GRISHAM'S THE RUNAWAY JURY

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ABSTRACT

John Grisham's seventh novel chronicles a law suit against the tobacco industry set in a Biloxi, Mississippi, courtroom. Before his writing career started, as a lawyer in a single-man firm, Grisham frequently took civil cases, including product liability, although never one of the multimillion dollar magnitude nor the nationwide attention that he describes here. This novel is a thriller about two competing efforts to rig the jury's verdict: one from the evil tobacco industry, the other from a seemingly innocuous juror. As is typical for Grisham, the little guy wins this battle and brings about a huge defeat for Big Tobacco. Thus readers marvel at the intricate manoeuvres of the competing conspirators and laugh at the ways some manoeuvres work out.

KEYWORDS : John Grisham, Book review, The Runaway Jury, Grisham's novels

INTRODUCTION TO THE NOVEL¹

Every jury has a leader, and the verdict belongs to him.

Wendall Rohr and a lawful group of effective tort legal advisors have documented suit in the interest of offended party Celeste Wood, whose spouse died of lung cancer. The trial is to be held in Biloxi, Mississippi, a state thought to have ideal tort laws and thoughtful juries. The litigant is Pynex, a tobacco organization.

Indeed, even before the jury has been confirmed, a stealth legal hearer, Nicholas Easter, has started to unobtrusively scheme in the background, working together with a secretive lady referred to just as Marlee.

Rankin Fitch, a shady "advisor" who has coordinated eight effective trials for the tobacco business, has put a camera in the court keeping in mind the end goal to watch the procedures in his office adjacent. He has started to plot many plans to reach to the jury. He intended to get to Millie Dupree through coercing her husband through a tape that makes them attempt to pay off an authority. He reaches to Lonnie Shaver through persuading an organization to purchase his boss and persuade him through introduction. He additionally tries to achieve Rikki Coleman through a shakedown of uncovering her premature birth to her husband. As the case proceeds with, Fitch is drawn closer by Marlee with a proposition to "purchase" the decision.

Very right off the bat, it ends up noticeably evident what Nicholas Easter and his darling/accomplice Marlee are doing: he is working from within to pick up control of jury - being cordial, thoughtful and exceptionally accommodating to members of the jury who may be prevailed upon, and fairly merciless to the individuals who demonstrate impenetrable to his endeavours. Inevitably, Easter moves toward becoming jury foreman after the past one falls sick (coming about because of Nicholas spiking his espresso). Easter additionally figures out how to totally trick and over and again control the Presiding Judge - in spite of his being a veteran judge who is very much aware of the tremendous money related premiums included, and who (accurately) associates the two sides with falling back on underhand strategies.

In the meantime, Marlee goes about as Easter's operator outwardly, progressively persuading Fitch that, without a doubt, Easter is responsible for the jury and in a position to convey any decision on request.

Marlee gives the exceedingly experienced and critical Fitch the feeling that the match's protest in doing this is absolutely hired fighter - to pitch the decision to most astounding bidder. In any case, Fitch endeavours to find Marlee's actual name and forerunners. This ends up being to a great degree troublesome, and the criminologists utilized by Fitch express their grudging admiration for her aptitude sequestered from everything her tracks.

With the court procedures achieving their peak, Fitch - still oblivious about Marlee's past - consents to her proposition to pay \$10 million for a positive decision. Simply after the cash was unavoidably exchanged to a seaward saving money account do the analysts find the shattering truth: Marlee's folks have both kicked the bucket because of smoking; a long way from a critical hired soldier, she is in certainty a fanatical hostile to smoking crusader. In this manner, Fitch realizes that he lost his principals' \$10 million notwithstanding having lost the trial.

Inside the shut jury room, Easter persuades the jury to discover for the offended party and make a huge fiscal honour - \$2 million for compensatory harms, and \$400 million for correctional measures. While not ready to influence the whole jury, Easter gets nine out of twelve jurors to back him - which is sufficient, 75% of the jury being adequate for a legitimate decision in a common case. The safeguard legal advisors and their bosses are crushed.

In the interim, at the Cayman Islands, Marlee makes utilization of her specific learning that tobacco organizations' stocks will take a sharp dive keeping in mind the end goal to short-offer them, making a colossal pick up on the first \$10 million - and Easter, having accomplished the objective of the drawn out battle, rapidly vanishes from Biloxi and gets inside and out of the US. While Easter and Marlee are presently rich and fulfilled that they served equity, Fitch understands that his notoriety has been decimated and that the tobacco organizations, once undefeatable, are currently defenceless against lawsuits.

The book closes with Marlee restoring the underlying \$10 million influence to Fitch, having utilized it to make a few times that much, and cautioning Fitch that she and Nicholas will dependably be viewing. She clarifies that she had no goal to take or lie, and that she bamboozled simply because "That was your whole customer caught on."²

SOCIAL SENSITIVITY OF THE NOVEL

John Grisham's seventh novel chronicles a law suit against the tobacco industry set in a Biloxi, Mississippi, courtroom. Before his writing career started, as a lawyer in a single-man firm, Grisham frequently took civil cases, including product liability, although never one of the multimillion dollar magnitude nor the nationwide attention that he describes here. As Grisham's fans would expect, The Runaway Jury is considerably more than a calm and canny novelization of the ideas of common law.³

Indeed, this novel is a thriller about two competing efforts to rig the jury's verdict: one from the evil tobacco industry, the other from a seemingly innocuous juror. As is normal for Grisham, the little person wins this fight and achieves an immense thrashing for Big Tobacco.

Grisham's thrillers tend to address big social issues as they deliver

page-turning drama. Another obvious line of inquiry is concerns about the jury system. Reading groups could discuss if any members have served on juries or been a party, a witness, or a spectator at a jury trial. The reaction of smokers to the novel might be interesting to gauge. A third big issue for discussion could be moral relativism: in this novel, what is the "right" or "just" thing to do? What faith do readers have in juries, given their own experiences and some of the notorious verdicts from the 1990s?

A fruitful subject for opening discussion of the novel is how readers feel about law suits, about huge monetary judgments against big corporations, and about tobacco litigation. Where is "justice" in this novel? Another important social issue in this novel would be the consumption of tobacco. Many people might find it hurtful that usage of such amounts of tobacco does not usually kill people as depicted in the novel. Some might find it otherwise and that it may send a wrong message towards the society.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Carl Nussman, a legal counselor and jury determination expert, acquaints the peruser with member of the jury number 56, Nicholas Easter, as he exhibits Easter's dossier to the legal advisors at Whitney and Cable and White. They have very little information about Easter, but they notice that he has been talking with a woman in the store who lit up a cigarette. The lawyers also discover that she was recording the conversation. Carl then moves on to juror number 57, Traci Wilkes, who is a doctor's wife, mother of three, exercise junkie and closet smoker. Upon moving on to juror number 58, the intimidating figure of Rankin Fitch bursts into the office and demands to know why there are still potential jurors that remain a mystery. He then orders the team to continue to work many hours into the weekend until the job is done. Then the scene begins by taking the reader out to a beach house on the Gulf Coast where we meet four men - the CEOs of the Big Four, the tobacco companies at the center of a litigation boom that has seen smokers suing the tobacco companies. Although the companies are sued separately, they have all joined to create The Fund - the pool of secret money that is used to build the best defense cases to avoid the massive payouts that the plaintiffs are looking for.⁴

Rankin Fitch, who administers The Fund, has gathered the men together. Fitch has won eight trials without a loss. Fitch updates the men on the progress of the case, reassuring a nervous D. Martin Jankle, CEO of Pynex, and the defendant in the latest bout of litigation. A heavy-set middle-aged man with a black-and-grey goatee, Rankin Fitch is feared by most who know him, but not many do. Despite the fact that being the manager of The Fund and the facilitator of numerous parts of the trial, Fitch stays out of sight of the procedures and by and large is just known to the individuals who work for the safeguard. An alcoholic in a former life, Fitch has a short temper and is quick to lose it when things do not go his way. Fitch's manner is intimidating and brutish, and he commands respect through fear, even with those who outrank him, such as the CEOs of the Big Four.

He is meticulous in his planning, making sure that every detail is fine-tuned, and is elaborate and ruthless in his dealings with the jurors. With his good connections in high places. There are object and places that plays an important role in analysis of this satirical remarks that made in the novel this tells about the insider trading going on in the legal system.

THEMES USED

Power and Influence

One of the fundamental subjects going through The Runaway Jury is that of energy and its defilement and corruption. Throughout the novel power is achieved through wealth and stature, which can be used to influence or pay anyone off. The reader sees this principally through the Big Four, who, despite the fact that they are really contending organizations; meet up to be a solid power against the counter tobacco enactment. They use their collective wealth to carry out elaborate schemes to influence and sway the votes of jurors and their families, and their size is used to influence

government organizations or anyone who gets in their way. The possibility of riches prompting influence is strengthened by this case in Biloxi, as the tobacco organizations come up against a substantially wealthier offended party that represents a genuine risk to the Big Four.⁵

Contest is from the lawyers fight the trial especially for the team anti-tobacco company that if they win the battle each of them will fame and of course many other of case will come than money will flow their way, because this is a big case from the big company, "Nothing rivalled the thrill of big-time litigation" Then, power is representative from the juror whom get important role in the court because, they are group of people that have power in verdict someone guilty or not. So, from this case we can see the position of jury's power is a susceptible as a market to winning the trial. And, the money is the main purpose for them who had fight than each of them will do anything to intimidate and attack the enemy for lose the trial. The Runaway Jury is kind of judicial conspirator which can make us understand that the judicial world is not always clean or in other words we can say it is not free from corruption. The novel itself shows us that it is so easy for a judicial mafia to buy the law, who has the money so they will control the judicial.⁶

Thus, the interesting point that I want to talk in this paper is the Jury's Power on control the judicial that representative by Nicholas Easter and his companion Marlee that use alias name in their action as a jury and the mediator that connected between Easter and Rankin Fitch. In this story, Rankin Fitch is the man who standing on behind the scene of Tobacco Company fund, in other means, he is the man who control The Fund and stops at nothing to get the result that he wants. In other side, to the other cases, the lawyer for the plaintiff, Wendall Rohr, is also well funded and assisted by seven other lawyers. The using of alias name from Easter and Marlee can be guess there were the hidden purpose for both of them to come inside of the battle.

WRITING TECHNIQUES BY JOHN GRISHAM

Grisham leavens his plot with humour.

Thus readers marvel at the intricate manoeuvres of the competing conspirators and laugh at the ways some manoeuvres work out. In a funny scene early on, one of the prospective jurors proudly announces that he is blind, a fact that millions of dollars paid to the jury investigators failed to uncover.

Then this blind man wants to be considered for service in this law suit, or he will sue! In another early scene, Nicholas tests his ability to manipulate the jury by convincing them to recite the Pledge of Allegiance when they enter the jury box, a move which discomposes everyone else in the courtroom.

Grisham shows a dry, cynical, and knowing amusingness, a strategy that imprints about every one of his books. He offers a deriding knowledge into the caprices of trials.⁷

As usual with Grisham, the writing is no more than workmanlike, the characterizations are alternatively thin and too broad, but all is redeemed by his patented combination of expertise and narrative drive. What makes The Runaway Jury his most rewarding novel to date is that it is fully enlisted in an issue of substance, in which arguments of genuine pith are hammered out and resolved in a manner that is both intellectually and emotionally satisfying. It's a thriller for people who think.

LITERARY PRECEDENTS FOR THE RUNAWAY JURY

A fine preparation or contrast for The Runaway Jury is any of the versions of Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose. Rose wrote the original television play in 1954, then expanded the script for the celebrated 1957 film with Henry Fonda as the honourable juror #8 who persuades a reluctant jury to acquit a murder defendant. (Sherman L. Sergei adapted the material into a three-act stage play. Rose himself updated the script for a 1997 cable telecast.) Juror #8 is an unambiguously good man whose decency wins the jurors to his

side. Most of the jurymen are quiet and unassuming, willing to be led. Juror #8 must joust for control with the only two other men who have assertive personalities. Contrasting Juror #8 and Nicholas reveals very different views of court procedures.⁸

The process of jury selection itself, both sides investigate the prospective jurors as best they can. They cannot go and talk to them but indirectly investigate their backgrounds, talk to friends and neighbours, take pictures of them, look up their financial backgrounds, etc. Then the jurors will have long questionnaires and answering questions that both sides have developed that are designed to learn more about them. Then finally they get to ask the jurors questions. The jury is selected, and the trial begins in Judge Harkin's court. Then one day in court, a woman named Marlee hands one of the deputies a note to pass on to Fitch. The note contains information about what the eleventh jurors; include Nicholas Easter, the right man who can be trusted as the leader of the jurors that have strong influence to the other jury to win the company. Easter "knew that before dark today an entire committee of handwriting experts on both sides would be poring over his words, not caring so much about what he said but more about how he formed his letters. He needed to seem perfect and astute, clever and liberal, fit for hearing with ears and choosing matters reasonably, an authority they would clamour for. He'd read three books on the ins and outs of handwriting analysis". "Every jury has a leader, and that's where you find your verdict". In this part, Marlee had play in the main important role to bring in Easter into the power jury's man that controls the other juries to make the right verdict. As an incentive Marlee makes sure Fitch to believe what she says and in fortunately this is work. And to other compensation Marlee asks Fitch for \$10,000,000 in exchange for the verdict he desires and he is willing to pay her. Start from this, Fitch begin distrust to both of them and try to figure out who Easter and Marlee are, as both of them have false identities.⁹

PLOT OVERVIEW

The story takes place mostly in the courtroom. During the beginning of the trial a mysterious woman shows up. She shows Fitch that she can control the jury and its verdict. When she causes 2 members of the jury to be removed, Fitch becomes interested in who this mysterious woman is. He tries to figure out who she is, but she is always one step ahead of him.¹⁰

The main character of the novel is Nicholas Easter. He is chosen as one of the jurors. While they were choosing the jury, they started to look around and find out information on the potential jurors. They don't find out much about Nicholas. He and the mysterious woman know each other very well.

Everyone seems to like Nicholas the most. Even though he isn't chosen as their leader, the jurors treat him like he is. Also the judge has taken a liking to him. He went to college to become a lawyer, but he dropped out early. He uses the knowledge he gained there to understand what is going on in the courtroom and also to persuade the other jurors to do what he says.

Eventually Fitch catches on to what Nicholas and the mysterious woman are doing and tries to get them to sway to the tobacco company's side. Fitch investigates into both of their pasts and figures out who they both are.

Even though this story is fictional John Grisham makes you feel as if you had experienced it before. This book makes you wonder what you would have done if you were Nicholas and which side you would have chosen. One of the main themes of *The Runaway Jury* is power and its corruption. In the story power is achieved through wealth which can be used to influence or pay anyone off. This is primarily the tobacco company. This book shows how deception and betrayal are everywhere.

OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (REVIEW)

Runaway Jury is the more customary Grisham, yet a clever

anticipation filled story. I truly appreciated it. Legal advisors will despise it, as it depicts them as loathsome parasitic win-at-any-cost malignant characters. Luckily, in this novel they get their due. In this novel Grisham analyses the tobacco business. Given the completely dazzling measure of cash engaged with the current class activity suits against the tobacco organizations, Grisham begins with the supposition, a very sensible one, that the business legal counsellors will persevere relentlessly to keep a choice conflicting with them and they put aside an enormous slush store to pay for a wide range of messy traps.

Another person chooses to control the jury results to their own particular benefit (there's a not eccentric connect to the counter smokers included, but rather what they do with the cash is truly clever regardless of the possibility that I didn't exactly see how they did it). Before long the corporate attorneys are being sucked into a plan they can't control however figure they may have the capacity to control. Meanwhile they are inconspicuously, and not all that furtively, endeavouring to impact the attendants to their direction of thinking. Grisham knows how to compose court show and this book has some of his best.

Grisham is either amazingly farsighted or out and out fortunate; in light of the fact that with open worries about the tobacco organizations warming up, and two noteworthy true to life books presently gathering a ton of consideration, he has thought of a tobacco-suit novel that lights up the court. *The Runaway Jury* is a seriously intense legitimate spine chiller. I could feel my heart beating as I read the last pages of the book. I was snared on Grisham's portrayal as a tyke hypnotized by sleep time narrating. The book handles a great deal of imperative focuses about cigarette smoking which make the story all the more fascinating.

Maybe Grisham's books resemble cigarettes with nicotine substances which make them so addictive.¹¹

CONCLUSION

The Good: The beginning and very end of this book were very fast-paced and enticing. I enjoyed the mysterious characters and that the author allows the reader to know what many are thinking and feeling through various viewpoints. The plot-line of this book was very original.

The Bad: I felt like I was reading the Bible at times: So many characters were introduced throughout the entirety of the book, and it was difficult to keep up with them and their various personalities. It was also difficult to keep up with the varying attempts to sabotage a fair trial.

The Ugly: I got bored towards the middle of the book and had to force myself to continue reading. If I hadn't been 200+ pages in already, I probably wouldn't have finished it.

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