

= The Litigators =

The Litigators is a 2011 legal thriller novel by John Grisham , his 25th fiction novel overall . The Litigators is about a two @-@ partner Chicago law firm attempting to strike it rich in a class action lawsuit over a cholesterol reduction drug by a major pharmaceutical drug company . The protagonist is a Harvard Law School grad big law firm burnout who stumbles upon the boutique and joins it only to find himself litigating against his old law firm in this case . The book is regarded as more humorous than most of Grisham 's prior novels .

The theme of a young lawyer being fed up with a giant law firm and bolting away to less lucrative but more satisfying career is shared with " The Associate " . The theme of a lawsuit against a giant corporation appeared in " The Runaway Jury " - but in the present book , the corporation is vindicated and proven to have been unjustly maligned (at least on the specific drug which is the subject of the lawsuit) and the mass tort lawyers are seen as greedy and unscrupulous , ultimately bolting and leaving the protagonist 's tiny Chicago firm in the lurch .

Critical reviews were mixed for the book , with several opinions noting a lack of suspense . Nonetheless , the book has achieved both hardcover and ebook # 1 best seller status on various lists , including both The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal . However , since some services do not separate fiction and non @-@ fiction books , it did not debut as a # 1 bestseller on certain lists , such as the USA Today . Some reviewers noted that this story would lend itself to an adapted screenplay .

= = Background = =

Having sold 250 million copies of his previous 24 novels in 29 languages , Grisham had produced an international bestseller with each prior book . Including the release of The Litigators , Grisham has produced 23 adult fiction novels and 2 children 's fiction novels as well as a short story collection . In addition , he has produced one non @-@ fiction book . Thus , various sources claim this to be his 23rd , 25th , or 26th book .

In the first of a two @-@ part interview with The Wall Street Journal , Grisham claimed that although he usually attempts to include humor in his submitted drafts , it is usually removed during the editorial process . However , in this case much of the humor survived editing . In the second part of the interview the following week , Grisham noted that his inspirations for the book included television advertisements and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill .

= = Publication = =

Leading book retailers such as Amazon.com , Barnes & Noble , and Walmart released the book in hardcover format in the United States as a Doubleday publication on October 25 , 2011 . In the United Kingdom , the book was published with different cover art by Hodder & Stoughton on the same date . Random House published the paperback version on June 26 , 2012 .

The book is also available as an audiobook , narrated by Scott Brick , and in ebook format . Other formats available on October 25 , included large @-@ print , compact disc and abridged compact disc . A limited edition will be available on November 22 , 2011 . An excerpt from the book was included in some editions including the iTunes Store edition of The Confession , which was his prior adult novel .

= = Plot = =

Oscar Finley and Wally Figg are the bickering partners of a small law firm in the South Side of Chicago . Oscar 's character holds the firm together despite the childish and unethical behavior of Wally , his junior partner . Their bickering is often mediated by Rochelle , the highly competent African American secretary , who had learned a lot of law in he eight years in the office . Meanwhile David Zinc , a graduate of the Harvard Law School , is completely fed up with the grinding and

dehumanizing - though well @-@ paid - life of an Associate in the giant law firm of Rogan Rothberg , where in five years of work he had never seen the inside of a courtroom . He suddenly breaks away , goes on a drinking binge and by chance finds himself at the Finley & Figg office . Feeling an elevating sense of freedom and vowing never to go back , Zinc willingly relegates himself to working for the two disreputable street lawyers and ambulance chasers .

While Wally goes to a funeral home to attend the wake of a former estate client , the client 's son claims that his father was killed by Krayoxx , a cholesterol @-@ lowering drug developed by the fictional pharmaceutical company Varrick Labs . Ecstatic at the possible monetary returns on the case , the firm finds several former clients who appear to have valid claims about Krayoxx . Oscar and Wally generate publicity in the Chicago Tribune with a picture of their filing ; this induces an avalanche of communications and leads them to several additional claimants .

Wally notices a blossoming class action lawsuit against Varrick Labs in Florida , and realizes that if he can find some patients to sign as clients , he can earn a big payday on another firm 's coattails . However , some complications make the story interesting . Although none of the three Finley & Figg lawyers had previously argued in United States federal court , that is where they find themselves pitted against Zinc 's old firm with this case . In fact , David 's expertise was in long @-@ term bonds .

Once the firm 's claims become prominent , mass tort operators approach them about being part of a mass settlement . Wally flies to Las Vegas to meet the other mass tort interests , most notably Jerry Alisandros . Varrick 's CEO flies to Chicago to meet Nadine Karros , a leading defense attorney , who works for Rogan Rothberg . Believing that they can get federal judge Harry Seawright to claim jurisdiction , Karros is chosen for her firms ' ties to him and her expertise . The case is soon expedited on Seawright 's docket with Finley & Figg 's claim singled out of the tort claimants and Karros takes action to have Finley & Figg 's eight death cases heard separately . Eventually , Alisandros learns that tests of Krayoxx yield benign results . Oscar and his wife , Paula , are often at odds , and as a large settlement looms , he attempts to divorce her and cash out . After settlement talks break down with Varrick , Alisandros withdraws as co @-@ counsel and Finley & Figg motions to withdraw their claims .

Once at Finley & Figg , Zinc stumbles upon a lead poisoning brain damage case involving Burmese immigrants . He expends his own time and resources on their case . He also succeeds in representing immigrants in a labor law case . During the labor case , the employer attempted to have Finley & Figg 's offices burned down and the would @-@ be arsonist stumbled upon Oscar at the office . Oscar shot him and added an unnecessary debilitating shot that shattered his leg . He was sued for using excessive force .

With Varrick having spent 18 million dollars defending itself and the mass tort bar having vociferously discredited Krayoxx in the mass media , Karros motioned for frivolous lawsuit sanctions pending a withdrawn motion . Additionally , actions were initiated for legal malpractice regarding Wally 's letters that promised 2 million dollar settlement followed by motions to dismiss without notifying his clients . After realizing that they could be sued for defense costs and malpractice for withdrawing the case , Finley & Figg withdraw their motions and agree to a jury trial that they believe to be futile . The trial opens as originally scheduled . During opening statements , Oscar suffered a myocardial infarction . Wally attempted to make light of the situation by proclaiming it an example of Krayoxx effects . Karros moved for mistrial and the motion was granted , leading to the need to pick a new jury . Wally stood in for Oscar as lead attorney while a new jury was seated and for the first day of testimony . The next day , the recovering alcoholic Figg was nowhere to be found although an empty pint bottle of Smirnoff Vodka was . After Wally was AWOL for a second day , David was pressed into service . Rueben Massey , Varrick 's CEO , instructed Karros not to move for likely @-@ successful summary judgment . Zinc declined to cross @-@ examine the first handful of expert witnesses that Varrick called , Eventually , Zinc discredited Varrick 's clinical trials during cross @-@ examination of the final expert witness . Nonetheless , the jury rendered a very quick not guilty verdict .

Zinc continued to pursue the lead poisoning product liability case . He settled the case for \$ 6 @.@ 5 million (including \$ 1 @.@ 5 million in legal fees) . David returns to the office and tells Oscar and

Wally of his settlement . He tells them of his plan to split his earnings evenly with them . In return the three of them are to sign a 12 @-@ month contract to enter an equal partnership and will no longer be an ambulance @-@ chasing firm . Oscar and Wally agree to the new contract . Later that year the partnership fell apart . Finley began spending less time in the office and eventually retired a happy man , Figg packed up and moved to Alaska , and Zinc opened his own product liability practice , David E. Zinc , Attorney @-@ at @-@ Law and hired Rochelle as his new secretary .

= = = List of characters = = =

Oscar Finley , Finley & Figg Senior Partner - A lazy , unhappily married , nearing retirement " fender @-@ benders , slip @-@ and @-@ falls and quickie divorces veteran " and former police officer , who took the bar exam three times .

Wally Figg , Finley & Figg Junior Partner - A former DUI convict and four @-@ time divorcé who trolls funeral parlors and sickrooms for clients . A University of Chicago Law School grad who took the bar exam three times .

David Zinc , Finley & Figg Associate attorney - Prototypical Grisham young hot shot Harvard graduate lawyer whose life is turned upside down .

Rochelle Gibson , Finley & Figg secretary - Former claimant against Finley & Figg who holds the firm together .

Nadine Karros , Defendant 's leading litigator recruited by Varrick .

Harry Seawright , federal judge .

DeeAnna Nuxhall , repeat Finley & Figg divorce customer and eventual love interest of Wally 's

Jerry Alisandros , mass tort operator who brings F & F into his firm 's fold .

Paula Finley , Oscar 's wife

Rueben Massey , CEO Varrick .

Helen , David 's wife

Anderson Zinc , David 's father (Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota) (per Ch . 15)

Caroline Zinc , David 's mother (art and photography teacher) (per Ch . 15)

Lana , David 's secretary

= = Critical review = =

The Litigators is said to be " an amusing and appalling look into the machinations of a nationwide class @-@ action suit , " according to Tobin Harshaw of Bloomberg L.P. The Wall Street Journal 's Christopher John Farley noted that the book is lighter than Grisham 's other works . Publishers Weekly called it a " biting farcical look at lawyers at the bottom of the food chain " . CNN described the book as an original perspective of " the best and worst the American system of justice has to offer " . Louis Bayard of The Washington Post , who described himself as someone who abandoned Grisham after his first three novels , noted that this book might be a good starting point for those who have tired of Grisham . Andrea Simakis of The Plain Dealer describes the book as a " heartier meal " than Grisham 's usual " potato @-@ chip fiction " . Publishers Weekly also notes that the fairy tale ending is not really in keeping with the introduction 's dark humor . Rick Arthur of The United Arab Emirates publication The National describes the book unfavorably as a cross between prior Grisham works The Street Lawyer and The King of Torts and similarly describes the protagonist unfavorably to those of The Firm and The Rainmaker . Geoffrey Wansell of the Daily Mail presented one of the more favorable reviews describing the book as " a spectacular return to form , displaying the clarity and passion that were there in his first thrillers but seemed to ebb away . " Wansell notes that Grisham returned to one of his seminal themes of the idealistic young lawyer fighting with the realization that corporations only care about maximizing profits .

The book has been derided for its lack of suspense . Carol Memmott of USA Today says that Grisham 's latest attempt to capture the spirit of the legal David and Goliath story is missing " the ratcheting @-@ up of suspense " that he has employed successfully in recent adult and youth novels . Harshaw claims that the book is lacking in the suspense that made The Firm so successful .

Arthur finds elements of the plot implausible and the story unsuspenseful as well as unsatisfying . Although the book is somewhat predictable , Bayard notes that " Grisham swerves clear of the usual melodramatic devices . Corporations aren't intrinsically venal ; plaintiffs aren't lambent with goodness . And best of all , no one is murdered for stumbling Too Close to the Truth . "

Some sources noted that the book has potential to become an adapted screenplay . Irish Independent describes Grisham 's new book as " following his usual route to the bestsellers list " and projects it as a candidate to be his next Hollywood film . Although it is standard Grisham fare , Independent noted that it provides the usual thrills in Grisham 's comfortable legal world and should be a gripping read for his usual fans . The Sunday Express noted that the book could be readily converted to a screenplay , but its critic , Robin Callender Smith , viewed the " ambulance chasing " ethos as a foreign thing that Brits might have to worry about in the near future .

Simakis praised the book for having more depth of character than Grisham 's novels customarily do . She compares the protagonist to Mitch McDeere from The Firm and Rudy Baylor from The Rainmaker . Memmott says that most of the claimants that they find are unsympathetic , but a few are from somewhat sympathetic immigrant families . Simakis notes that Wally trades sex for legal services with one claimant . Harshaw says that the book is a bit sentimental and comparatively lacking in terms of secondary character development for Grisham . Larry Orenstein of Canada 's Globe and Mail notes that on the dramatic scale this book has instances of laugh out loud humor that make it more like Boston Legal than The Practice , which Boston Legal was spun off from .

= = Commercial success = =

According to The Huffington Post , this book is the ninth best @-@ selling fiction book of the year in 2011 , while according to the USA Today this was the 16th best selling book overall in 2011 . According to Amazon.com the book was the number eight overall best seller .

= = = Hardcover = = =

It immediately was listed as the Publishers Weekly # 1 best @-@ seller among fiction hardcover books according to Reuters . It was also listed as the # 1 best @-@ seller by The New York Times in the November 13 , 2011 book review section for the week ending October 29 , 2011 for Hardcover Fiction , E @-@ Book Fiction , Combined Hardcover & Paperback Fiction , and the Combined Print and E @-@ Book Fiction . It dropped from the # 1 position in its second week on the list . It remained on the Combined Hardcover & Paperback Fiction list until the February 19 , 2012 list (15 weeks) for the week ending February 4 . It remained on both the Hardcover Fiction list and the Combined Print and E @-@ Book Fiction list until the February 26 list (16 weeks) for the week ending February 11 . It remained on the E @-@ Book Fiction list until the March 11 list (18 weeks) for the week ending February 25 .

The Wall Street Journal announced that on Saturday October 29 , it would begin incorporating digital book sales in its best seller lists . When the book debuted in The Wall Street Journal list on November 5 for the week ending October 30 , it was listed first in Hardcover Fiction , Fiction E @-@ Books and Fiction Combined . It retained the hardcover lead the following week , but lost the other leads . After two weeks it was surpassed on the hardcover list as well . It remained on The Wall Street Journal Hardcover Fiction , Fiction E @-@ Books and Fiction Combined best seller lists until the January 7 listing for the week ended on January 1 , 2012 .

The book was released the day after Walter Isaacson 's biography of Steve Jobs , entitled Steve Jobs , was released by Simon & Schuster . Jobs had died on October 5 and the release date was moved forward . The Jobs book 's release had been moved forward twice ; It had been moved from spring 2012 to November 21 after Jobs stepped down and then to the October 24 date after his death . When The Litigators debuted on November 3 on the USA Today best @-@ seller list , which does not separate fiction and non @-@ fiction , it debuted at number 2 behind the Jobs book .

= = = Paperback = = =

It debuted at # 1 on the New York Times Paperback Mass @-@ Market Fiction Best Sellers list on July 15 , 2012 (reflecting sales for the week ending June 30 , 2012) . The book remained at # 1 until the August 12 list (reflecting sales of the week ending July 28 , 2012) , making a five @-@ week run . It continued to appear on the list until the January 13 , 2013 list (reflecting sales for the week ending December 29 , 2012) . On the USA Today list , which include fiction and non @-@ fiction as well as hardcover and paperback , it debuted at # 10 in the week of July 5 , following its paperback release .