



## The Litigators

*John Grisham*

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## **The Litigators** John Grisham

DAVID ZINC HAS IT ALL: BIG FIRM, BIG SALARY, LIFE IN THE FAST LANE.  
UNTIL THE DAY HE SNAPS AND THROWS IT ALL AWAY.

Leaving the world of corporate law far behind, he talks himself into a new job with Finley & Figg. A self-styled 'boutique' firm with only two partners. Oscar Finley and Wally Figg are ambulance-chasing street lawyers who hustle nickel-and-dime cases, dreaming of landing the big win.

For all his Harvard Law Degree and five years with Chicago's top firm, Zinc has never entered a courtroom, never helped a client who really needed a lawyer, never handled a gun.

All that is about to change.

## **The Litigators Details**

Date : Published 2011 by Hodder & Stoughton

ISBN : 9781444729726

Author : John Grisham

Format : Paperback 436 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Thriller, Legal Thriller

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## From Reader Review The Litigators for online ebook

### David says

This is a most enjoyable book, about David Zinc, a lawyer who got fed up with his job in a huge, fancy law firm. He got drunk, then joined up with a two-man law firm that specialized in ambulance chasing, DUI's, and quick divorces. This small firm had a weak grasp of ethical behavior. Zinc suffers a spectacular drop in salary, but sees an unusual opportunity, and grabs it.

Along comes the potential for a huge class action suit against a drug company. Their drug, Krayoxx, seems to be in the spotlight, and anecdotes of severe side effects are in the news. The small firm gets involved, hoping to avoid doing any real work. They think that their only job is to find plaintiffs and other lawyers will do their job for them. They are clueless; they have no idea how much trouble they are getting into!

This was a fun book; lots of twists in the plot, funny dialog, and generally unpredictable. That's the type of story I like the most; a story line that cannot be predicted ahead of time. And the characters are well-developed. Their personalities are so different from each other, that really helped make the book come alive.

I didn't read this book; I listened to the audiobook, as read by Dennis Boutsikaris. He does an excellent job as a narrator.

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### James Thane says

This is another entertaining read from John Grisham. A young lawyer, David Zinc, cracks one morning under the strain of his job at a top Chicago firm. On arriving at work, instead of marching dutifully to his desk, he leaps back into the elevator, runs out to the street and soon finds himself in a bar where he spends the rest of the day drinking himself into oblivion.

Hours later, David stumbles out of the bar and into a cab and then finds himself on the doorstep of the law firm of Finley and Figg in one of the city's less than desirable neighborhoods. Wally Figg and Oscar Finley are a couple of ambulance chasers who literally bolt from their desks and race out into the street at the tantalizing sound of a car crash. After a fairly long partnership, they are barely scraping by.

David happens by just as a major accident occurs in front of the offices of Finley and Figg. Oscar and Wally run out and attempt to recruit clients from among the victims and in the aftermath, David convinces them to hire him. He is willing to work for practically no base salary along with a share of the fees that he generates.

Shortly thereafter, Wally Figg stumbles across what he believes to be the chance of a legal lifetime. A study suggests that Krayoxx, a very popular cholesterol drug, may be having deadly side effects. One of Finley and Figg's clients who took the drug has just died, and Wally is determined to round up as many other apparent Krayoxx victims as he can find and sue Verrick Labs, the giant drug maker that produced Krayoxx.

The fact that no member of the firm has any experience in such cases deters Wally not in the slightest. Nor does the fact that none of the three members of the firm has ever appeared in a real court trial of any consequence. Nor does the fact that the firm has no money to hire the experts required to actually make the case. Oscar and David have serious reservations about the whole idea, but Wally insists that it's a can't-miss

proposition and before long, the visions of a giant financial windfall overpower the better judgment of the other two members of the firm. The consequences are interesting to say the least.

This is a lighter and more humorous book than some of Mr. Grisham's more recent novels and it offers an interesting look into the world of the lawyers who make a career out of putting together large class action lawsuits in the hope of making fortunes out of the fees involved. It should appeal to a large number of readers.

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## Michael says

It's interesting that I'd read John Grisham's latest novel *The Litigators* just as the promotional blitz for the NBC series based on his first huge bestseller *The Firm* is kicking into gear. Based on what I recall of *The Firm* and having read the latest Grisham offering, I honestly think the premise of *The Litigators* has far more promise and potential as a weekly television series than *The Firm* does. (Of course, *The Firm* has name recognition and a Tom Cruise movie in its favor, so I can see why NBC might go for that over this one.)

With Grisham, it seems like every other novel these days is great and then the next one is kind of a disappointment. Unfortunately, it appears *The Litigators* is that next one that was kind of a disappointment.

It's certainly not due to a lack of trying by Grisham. At this point, it'd be easy for him to go on auto-pilot and churn out a legal thriller a year following a standard formula as many big-name best selling authors are content to do (I'm looking at you James Patterson). Instead, Grisham seems willing to push new boundaries with his novels. In the case of *The Litigators* that push is toward a more satirical and humorous novel than many of his previous installments. And while that take works in the first several chapters, it begins to wear a bit thin by the middle third of the book and I rapidly found myself losing patience with the story down the home stretch.

It's the story of a Finley & Figg, a lower scale firm that could best be described as ambulance chasers. Wally Figg has always dreamed of the high risk, high reward work of class action law suits and when he stumbles onto a potential one involving a cholesterol drug from a pharmaceutical company with a history of settling before the trial hits the courtroom, he eagerly begins signing up cases. He also casts his lot with a big name litigation firm to try and put some fear into the company.

Onto the scene of Finley & Figg comes David Zinc, a young lawyer at a corporate firm. Riding the elevator to his 97th floor cubicle one morning, David decides he's had enough and walks away. After a day spent drinking in a bar, he stumbles into Finley & Figg and takes a job there to find out the other side of being a lawyer.

Of course, there's an inevitable worlds-colliding conflict from the two sides, from which much of the humor stems. But Grisham offers up more than just a bit of humor from his eccentric characters. He offers some real insight and commentary on the world of mass tort litigation and the positive and negative impacts of it. During the story, David stumbles across a potential lawsuit where someone has genuinely been harmed by corporate negligence and the world of litigation will have a positive impact on a family and the community instead of just being done for the sake of a quick profit via settlement. Those portions of the story are far more effective and interesting than the world of mass tort as seen through the drug company storyline. (And it's also abundantly clear where Grisham's sympathies are).

It's just too bad that the novel isn't better than the sum of its parts. During the middle and last third of the novel, I couldn't help but wonder if this premise might be better served as a short story or novella.

It's not a terrible book, by any stretch of the imagination. It's just not quite up to the level we've seen from Grisham in his better works.

But the good news is that given his recent pattern, his next book should be a lot better.

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### **Melodie says**

This is a look at the underbelly of law, at both ends of the spectrum. At one end you have the corporate sharks, hired guns of the big boys of business and finance. At the other end you have the ambulance chasers, willing to sue anyone/anything that will increase the size of their wallets. Somewhere in between you have the rare minority that actually practice law as it should be.

At first I was put off by the greasy spoon feeling given off by the high and low end lawyers. But slowly I became invested in David Zinc and his story. Written with more humor than is usual for Mr. Grisham, the story line plodded a bit, then took off running about half way through. And I always appreciate his willingness to expose the seedy side of the law.

Ultimately it's the big one against the little one and while predictable, it was an enjoyable and even educational read. It showed me what's behind all those television ads urging people to call the number for the endless litany of bad drugs, car wrecks and on the job injuries. It's all about the money. Justice has little if anything to do with it.

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### **Marita says**

3.5 stars

A tale of rats and mice. On the one hand we have the smartly turned out, Harvard educated mice frantically scurrying on their wheel for hour after hour. On the other hand we have the sewer rats who passed their bar exams only after some failed attempts. These rats do what they can to survive, and if they have to chase ambulances to do so or grease outstretched palms, well so be it.

One day at the wheel, mouse David Zinc has a bit of a crisis and escapes. At the end of a long day of drinking, he stumbles upon the outfit Finley & Figg and promptly offers his services to the rats. Wife Helen scolds him: "You've lost your mind." He happily replies: "Yes, and it's so liberating."

Then the fun and games begin and lawyer David and his colleagues find themselves playing in the big league, and for very high stakes. David knows much about "high-yield, long-term bonds issued by foreign governments and corporations" but as, in that job, he never saw the inside of a court room he is out of his league and has to learn fast. When he takes on an additional task, he also learns how rewarding it can be to help others.

There are quirky characters, much humour and some light-hearted take-off of the legal profession. However, underlying the levity there are some serious issues.

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### **Stephen says**

As a John Grisham fan , I was surprised to hear some early criticism of his latest book. However, as I got deeper and deeper into the story, I am starting to understand. This story has much more humor in it than many of his previous books .....and that's good not bad.

One can't help but chuckle at the law firm of Finley & Figg. They are the epitome of the storefront, ambulance chasing, divorces and DUI small time lawyers. They have never been very successful and they are just about able to pay their bills each month. Besides the two of them they have a 'do everything' secretary, Rochelle Gibson. Actually there is a cautious 'detente' amongst all the players until 2 things happen that may change the lives of all of them. First of all, Wally Figg finds out about what may become a major class action lawsuit over a drug called Krayox. The drug allegedly helps lower cholesterol but may in fact be causing people to die of heart attacks. And the second event is the landing of one , David Zinc on their doorstep. Zinc has been a successful associate of a big downtown law firm when he has a complete meltdown. He is sick and tired of the corporate life and decides to 'dropout'. He spends a day at Abner's bar getting wasted and when he decides to leave, he doesn't know where to go.....going home and explaining this to his wife doesn't seem like a good idea. When he finally gets into a taxi, he notices a billboard sign for the law firm Finley & Figg and he tells the driver that that is his destination. And all the elements of Grisham's latest book are now in play. How will the law firm of Finley & Figg and their new associate handle the growing class action suit against Verrick?? How many victims can they sign up to represent and will they be successful?? None of them has actually tried a case before a judge !

Please enjoy Grisham's latest legal saga with a generous dose of humor.

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### **Patricia Kurz says**

Poor showing for JG.. I disliked it and I believe that JG did not write this.. some student or apprentice did. There is a touch of the real JG in the main courtroom scene, but it is thin and too short. I can't believe this is him. that's all I can say. I had the Audible version - not the text. Here is my "Audible.com review"

Please let me rant: Until the big courtroom scene, I do not believe the words of this book were written by JG. I believe it was either a student's effort at mimicry or a formulaic software program where names and scenes were tossed and spit out as a story. The story was weak and no anticipation was built into it. When David first happens into Finley & Figg, there was so much complaint about his former boss, I expected the boss to be found dead and David accused. That would have been a much better story. This mess was like a big soup pot wherein alcoholism, sexism, ageism, fat-ism, and stupid-ism were all put together to create a reason to have a trial. The trial, as expected, was an exercise in futility, but it served the purpose of trotting out beautiful, intelligent women for big corporate (read: bad guys) to ogle and demean.

The saving grace, in the last 40 minutes of 11 hours was another fiasco. While it is all very sweet to hope for the kind of CEO we learn of at the end, it is unlikely and the results were too swift and also unlikely -- the corporation "caved" under so little pressure.

As for the reader: He sounded like Christopher Walken. anyway, I do not know if an author gets to prep the reader or even review the reading but this guy mispronounced words -- specifically Chicago words. He pronounced LaSalle Street as Lasall, and the town of Des Plaines as deplanes. While that's not a huge deal, it

contributed to my dislike for the book. The fact that it was in Chicago was a little disconcerting, since I love the Mississippi novels so much, but as I live here, it's fun to listen for landmarks and references. Those that were accurately named (not renamed as fictional) were obviously gleaned from some reference book and had not the ring of any authenticity. That may all be the fault of the reader's lack of preparation, but it mattered in the listening.

Strange and inexplicable: There is a dog in the office who gets fed, but never taken OUT? There was no scene that I can recall that mentioned AC (Ambulance Chaser) getting out to do his business. A small thing, I know, but goes to making me think JG didn't touch this text.

When David is at the BIG TRIAL, he has reams of information about a variety of other products manufactured by the defendant. We heard nothing about David's research. Where did it come from? When did he do this? While he was walking his infant on the hourly shifts he shared with his wife? Come on!

The tying up of loose ends was fast and stupid. Finley and Figg were losers to massive degrees, but their savior, David comes in with a safety for all. When he walked in, he had money saved from his old job and he spread it around freely. Why? He didn't believe in those two yokels, not in the firm, not in the big case. We knew he was spontaneous and crazy when we met him, but this behavior is not sensible from within the context of the book. At the end, the savior comes through again, and the two hapless idiots get to skate on in their stupid lives. David is so "good" that his one dubious move, which could have caused him some bad press and bad luck, also evaporated.

The bar scenes at Abner's were the only times the book felt "real." They were so good that I thought I was reading a Lescroat/Dismas Hardy book.

Overall, I am shocked by the poor quality of the story, the writing and the reader. I am glad it was offered at below regular price, so I didn't use an Audible credit for it. Still, at \$17, it was expensive.

If JG really wrote this, I must extrapolate the following:

1. He is subliminally poking fun at: poor people, fat people, drunks and "hot" women.
2. He may overtly poke big corporate greediness and unscrupulous manufacturers, but his real targets seem to be the poor and uneducated. It took David (corrosion-resistant) Zinc to swoop down on the law firm, the poor immigrants, and the big bad capitalists, and David was not even well versed on the law and its machinations.
3. I do not have the text to refer to but at one point toward the end the author refers to a drive for one of the lawyers as a small Asian woman of dubious ethnicity. While the word "dubious" is appropriately used, it has a negative connotation, as if the uncertainty of her ethnicity is dubious -- not that the specific ethnicity was dubious. Call it nitpicking, but there are several of these plays on words that make question author's true feelings about some people. He maligned the clients of Finley & Figg for taking the bait on Krayoxx making them seem stupid, obese-lazy and oh, stupid. They got their come-uppance in the Krayoxx trial. But the Burmese clients, with their gentle and self-effacing ways, well, they do better. They had the benevolent CEO.
4. It was a silly book. It had elements of Carl Hiaasen and elements of top-rate Grisham. It had some Jonathan Kellerman (but not enough) and it had some Dismas Hardy. David's capacity for saving the firm and its deserving clients had a dose of Jack Reacher (of the intellectual variety); that is, his efforts were superhuman, a tad ridiculous and somewhat unsupported by reality.

So, why take so much time writing this? Shrug.. I expected more and got less. I am complaining. I am complaining about what I perceive is a laziness a carelessness by well-loved authors. Maybe they are contracted to put out work on a timetable. This one felt like an obligation rather than an enjoyable undertaking by one of my favorite authors. I regret that I have to wait for the next one to come out. I will wait for the reviews to hit before I invest money or anticipation in acquiring it.

Thank you for reading.

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### **Nicole R says**

gave up on John Grisham about 10 years ago when I was appalled at how horrible *The Summons* was! What happened to the hard-hitting author who had me on the edge of my seat and questioning the ever-moving ethical line between right and wrong with his early novels? *A Time to Kill*. *The Firm*. *The Rainmaker*. I loved those books.

After a decade of abandonment, two things happened: 1) I met Mr. Grisham several times and determined he needed another chance and 2) I heard that *The Litigators* was a return to his roots. I disagree with "return to his roots" but the book was enjoyable.

The law firm of Finley & Figg is not glamorous. The two man shop chances ambulances, convinced uncontested divorces to fight, and barely eek out a living in Chicago. David Zinc is billing \$500 an hour buried in the basement of a megafirm doing grunt work and couldn't hate it more. When these two universes merge over a litigation suit against a big drug company, they quickly realize they are in over their heads.

The storyline was fine. It was a bit predictable and I enjoyed the crazy characters of Oscar Finley and Wally Figg much more than the straight-laced and ever golden David Zinc, but it was entertaining. However, it lacked the intensity of Mr. Grisham's classics. He switched from questioning the ethics of big name companies and their deceptive CEOs to questioning the ethics of average people living in near poverty who were too anxious to make a quick buck. Everyone likes to beat up on the rich unethical CEO, but picking on Average Joe - or below-Average Joe in this case - wasn't as easy. However, in typical Grisham fashion, he did make me think about the motivations behind actions.

For me, the most glaring short fall was that this took place in Chicago. CHICAGO?! I have come to association Grisham with sweltering heat, slow drawls, and the courtesies of the South. Having his roots in Mississippi always brought a touch of authenticity to the setting of his books and I missed that connection. There was no specific Chicago culture to spice up this books and it could have been identically placed in any number of big cities.

All in all, I did enjoy the book. It was a fast paced, enjoyable read, that was the perfect start of summer read. However, I think I need to come to grips with the fact that Mr. Grisham's early works were simply outstanding and a hard bar to meet again.

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## **Cheri says**

This book was great....went through a bit of a ho-hum section, but the ending was fantastic...couldn't read it fast enough!!!!

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## **Perry says**

### **Grisham Special (And a Funny Lawyer Joke) [[3.75 stars]]**

Q: What's the difference between a lawyer and a rooster?

A: When a rooster wakes up in the morning, its primal urge is to cluck defiance.

Prior to reading this book a few years back, I'd grown disillusioned with Grisham's books, the recent ones like *The Brethren*, a book as agonizing as absurd. I thought perhaps he'd worn out, bored out or his ideas petered out.

For his first half-dozen years, he stropped his writing skills on the legal profession, slugging Big Business and sellout lawyers with a succession of suspenseful, at least plausible, blockbusters exploring legal issues just then hitting press. Much like a sustained thrum, and once a year, out came another NYT #1 bestseller in which Grisham delivered another upper left hook. And yet, he apparently lost the fire somewhere along the way, and "mailed in" some formulaic evanescent stories with stiff, largely unlikeable and forgettable characters, and unrealistic plots (see *The Brethren* as Exhibit 1).

In any case, I was skeptical in getting this one, to find Grisham back to his specialty: an unliterary, suspenseful and enjoyable yarn spiced with humor and affable, true-to-life characters, which also hits a pressing social issue (foreign manufacturers and domestic importers of toys with excessive lead levels as well as ambulance-chasing, class-action lawyers).

I recommend this for all Grisham fans.

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## **Katie says**

Why this book should probably have never been published:

1. Characters all were of dubious intelligence, and no one likes an idiot. A villain, maybe, or a nice, vengeful antagonist, but not a moron - let alone three of them.
2. Overt sexualization of the one female character. Must we describe her attire and 4-inch stilettos every time she enters the courtroom?
3. Eye-rollingly (yes, that's a word) predictable plot, from the boring Krayoxx case to the "I didn't see that coming! Oh wait, yes I did." sub-plot.
4. Fairy-tale ending for our hero (I use the term loosely, as I can't imagine mustering the concern to cheer on his successes or empathize with his disappointments)...really? Is this chick lit for the legal crowd?

5. Total lack of suspense. This will not be made into a movie with Tom Cruise sprinting down an empty street at night, briefcase full of sensitive, damning materials in hand.

As a quick read when you're just trying to pass the time (think plane/train/automobile), this may do, but only if you've read everything else on the underwhelming shelves of Hudson News. Otherwise, pick up a copy of the latest The Girl who Partook in Slightly Counter-Cultural Practices book and move on.

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### **Luanne Ollivier says**

Well, I had great plans to jot down some notes and quotes to share with you about John Grisham's newest book - The Litigators. Yeah, that didn't happen.... because it ended up being a non stop read for me - I picked it up on a Sunday morning and turned the last page late (late) that night.

I was hooked from the opening pages. David Zinc has toiled away at a prestigious law firm in relative obscurity for the last five years. Until the morning he realizes he can't do it anymore and walks away. And lands at the firm of Finley & Figg - ambulance chasers, divorce court specialists and anything else they can make a buck at. Although Wally and Oscar refer to the office as a 'boutique firm', they are anything but - Wally has just placed an ad for the firm on local bingo hall cards.

When Wally gets wind of a potentially big case involving a big name cholesterol drug. It seems folks taking it are suffering heart damage and even death. If they can find a few cases of their own and ride on the coat tails of the big players in a mass claim action suit, they could all be rich. It seems simple enough.....and that's enough of the plot given away.

What made The Litigators a non stop read? The characters for sure. Wally and Oscar's tactics are cringe worthy, their actions walk a fine line between working for the law and breaking it, but you just can't help rooting for them in this David and Goliath fight. David is eminently likable as well. He is sense and reason, but with a new found freedom since escaping the big firm drudgery. The personal storyline involving his wife Helen also added much to the book.

It seems like Grisham has a lot of fun writing The Litigators - there is a sly sense of humour underlying the entire book. I laughed out loud many times at the situations and dialogue. It was eye opening to see the legal maneuvering - much of the machinations involving the drug companies and lawyers gave me pause and made me wonder how much of it is fact. Quite frightening actually.

The Litigators is by far one of Grisham's best in my opinion (and I've read them all) An absolutely entertaining page turner that will be a well deserved best seller!

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### **Dimity says**

I won this book as a First Reads giveaway. In high school, I loved John Grisham but haven't returned to him since reading The King of Torts as a college sophomore. I couldn't tell if my tastes had matured or his quality had diminished but I was not impressed at all and he's fallen off my radar since then. (In fact, I didn't

realize he was back to writing legal fiction.) *The Litigators* started out rather promising; it lacked the intensity of earlier Grishams but it was also surprisingly hilarious. I enjoyed most of this book until about chapter 25 of 30-something when the magic wore off. The rest of the book has none of the charm it starts with and one can almost hear the crackling on the line reading the last few chapters as Grisham phones it in. At least one other reviewer suggested a ghost writer was at work and I can see where they got that opinion from, because it's an abrupt, almost 180 degrees turn in tone. It's like someone decided this book could only be 385 pages long and there was a major "oh shit" moment at page 300.

His female characters suck, but I seem to remember them generally existing in three forms; fat and matronly, hot and bitchy or the generally unremarkable youngish woman known as "wifey". I probably shouldn't complain too much about the female stereotypes as his legal books are generally more about the story than the characters. The male major characters in *The Litigators* are also rather wooden, and the plot, although entertaining in points, is not a gripping page turner like his 1990s thrillers , making it hard to dismiss the crappy characters.

*The Litigators* started out promising but the end of it was so disappointing, I'm only giving it 2 stars. This is a fine book to grab in the airport concourse (well, its mass market paperback edition will be) during a day of travel but not really a book I'd recommend carving out a cozy afternoon to read.

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### **Erin says**

In the past, I have enjoyed John Grisham's novels, but *The Litigators* did not live up to the standards of Grisham's early novels like *A Time to Kill* or *The Firm* , even some of his more recent novels are better developed in plot, characters, and conflict than *The Litigators* .

At first *The Litigators* seems ridiculous, lawyers running after (or causing) car accidents, but then the story picks up when David Zinc begins to look into the lead poisoning of a young, Burmese boy (whose name escapes me right now). This is where the novel picks up, but then drops off again because it returns to the Krayoxx case and the ridiculousness of Wally Figg, who appears as a caricature of a lawyer.

The novel would have been much better if it had focused on the lead poisoning and the impact of the poisoning on the Burmese family. This part is reminiscent of *The Client* , which is one of my favorite Grisham novels. Instead, *The Litigators* falls flat as "get-rich-quick" scheme of a story and lacks any seriousness and suspense that readers are used to with John Grisham.

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### **Will Saunders says**

When I first began reading John Grisham's *The Litigators* I was immediately drawn into it. It's a must-read book, if you enjoy the snappy witty charm of a young black woman keeping her older bosses together.

It begins with the plot centering on Wally, Oscar, and Rochelle – then a short time later David – who's personalities are as different as night and day. Oscar, the senior partner in Finley and Figg law offices situated on the West Side of Chicago, is a conservative jaded attorney who prides himself as a proverbial ambulance chasing attorney seeking the easy way to make a fast buck. His partner, Wally, a recovering

alcoholic, sometimes employs questionable business ethics but goes just far enough to avoid too much legal scrutiny. Rochelle a former client who threatened to sue Finley and Figg for malpractice, was hired as a settlement of sorts and is the first buffer between the two lawyers and some of their shady clients and business associates. David joined the team later brought a sense of soundness to the motley crew, leaving his six figure law firm, high-stress job for the peace of mind at the low-key firm of Finley and Figg. The story tells of good and bad of a class action lawsuit filed against a cholesterol-lowering drug that has caused a number of deaths.

The Litigators presents a very graphic account – using drama, humor, suspense, and sarcasm – to present a very entertaining and sometimes predictable picture, especially if you read Grisham's King of Torts. This has many of the same nuances. Nonetheless, it's a great read and I highly recommend it.

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