



The Burning Room

Michael Connelly

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In the LAPD's Open Unsolved Unit, not many murder victims die almost a decade after the crime. So when a man succumbs to complications from being shot by a stray bullet ten years earlier, Bosch catches a case in which the body is still fresh, but any other evidence is virtually non-existent.

Now Bosch and his new partner, rookie Detective Lucia Soto, are tasked with solving what turns out to be a highly charged, politically sensitive case. Starting with the bullet that's been lodged for years in the victim's spine, they must pull new leads from years-old information which soon reveals that this shooting may have been anything but random.

The Burning Room Details

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From Reader Review The Burning Room for online ebook

Frances says

Detective Harry Bosch nearing retirement has been paired with rookie Detective Lucia Soto to give guidance along with his expertise in solving cases. Working in LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit they are assigned a 10 year cold case of a victim shot while sitting in an outdoor plaza. However, the victim only recently died from the bullet which had been lodged in his spine with no hope of recovery until he became a corpse on the coroner's steel table being probed and poked mercilessly. Bosch is a dynamic, tenacious detective when once assigned a case will not stop until all leads have emerged, obtains solid evidence, and cuffs the guilty perpetrator. The Burning Room is an intense, skillfully crafted crime thriller and recommended to all readers.

Barbara says

Harry Bosch and his current partner, new murder detective Lucy Soto, work cold cases for the Los Angeles Police Department. Now they have an unusual one. Ten years ago mariachi band member Orlando Merced was shot in what was thought to be a drive by shooting. Merced survived, but the bullet was too close to his spine to remove, and the shooter was never caught. Now Merced has died from his injuries and the bullet has been recovered. Turns out it came from a rifle, giving Harry and Lucy new lines of investigation.

Meanwhile Harry learns that Lucy survived a long-ago deadly building fire that was thought to be gang-related, and Harry agrees to help her re-investigate that crime. Before long the fire is linked to the robbery of a check-cashing store, and Harry and Lucy are working all three cases.

The partners make good use of CCTV, computers, cell phones, and forensics to investigate the crimes, and the suspense builds as they discover one clue after another. Turns out the investigation into Merced's death has some political implications, and the check-cashing robbery seems to point to an inside job.

Harry and Lucy make an excellent team - their witness interrogations making good use of Lucy's fluency in Spanish. Harry also uses some of his other talents, like opening locked doors with paper clips and convincing a couple of old friends - a reporter and an FBI agent - to get him needed information. Harry even gets to spend some quality time with his teenage daughter.

The book has a wide array of interesting characters, including mariachi players, a former mayor and his assistant, a beautiful socialite, a Mother Superior, and more. The story moves at a steady clip to a well-constructed conclusion. This is a good book, recommended for mystery lovers - especially for Harry Bosch fans.

You can follow my reviews at <http://reviewsbybarbsaffer.blogspot.com/>

Eric says

There is nobody writing crime fiction that does it better than Connelly does. At this point in the series, most authors would be mailing in rote and tired copies of previous books, but Bosch just keeps evolving. It helps that Bosch is aging in real time, and his wisdom has begun to show in his work and the relationships with those around him -- specifically his teenage daughter and the new partner he is in charge of mentoring. Add to that the multiple cold case mysteries woven through this book, and an excellent ending -- not the climax, which was good but rushed, but the actual last few pages -- and you have another top-notch police procedural and another compelling chapter in Harry Bosch's life against crime.

Jonetta says

Detective Harry Bosch has one year left with the LAPD under the DROP agreement and he wants to make the most of it. He has a new partner, Lucia Soto, who doesn't have much experience but has great instincts. They're assigned a unique case where the victim just died of a gunshot wound inflicted almost ten years earlier. What looked like a cold case gang-related shooting turns into something much more. And, Soto has a personal relationship to another cold case that she and Bosch decide to covertly explore.

I read recently that Connelly's work on the *Bosch* television series has impacted his writing for this series, causing his storytelling to be more nimble and concise. I sensed that in this story as the pacing was excellent and there was much less inclusion of non-essential details. This was a fairly complex story because of the two investigations, which made it even more interesting. There were quite a few angles and it's the first time I felt Bosch acted like he had a partner. I loved how much he invested in Soto's training, which also helped me better understand the investigative process.

This is the first story narrated by Titus Welliver, the actor portraying Bosch in the TV series. Before listening to this one, I binged through the three seasons and have to say that Titus IS Bosch. As much as I've enjoyed the previous narrators, Dick Hill in particular, I'm quite happy with Welliver. Maybe that's helped by having watched the new series but no matter...he's my Harry. I enjoyed the story and the ending really caught me off guard. Can't wait to see what's next for Harry.

Sam Quixote says

Several years ago I read an article by the brilliant Nicholson Baker who was writing about traditional paper books vs ebooks. He was heavily on the side of paper books but he mentioned that he did stay up reading *The Lincoln Lawyer* in the dark on his phone using the Kindle app because he didn't want to turn on the light and wake his wife - he had to finish it no matter what!

That convinced me to check out *The Lincoln Lawyer* and he was right, it was amazing! Suddenly I had a new favourite writer and I picked up the next Michael Connelly I could find: *The Brass Verdict*. Again, it was great and I was introduced to a new character, Harry Bosch, who I began to read about in *Echo Park*, which might be my favourite Connelly book.

I ended up doing something I almost never do and read seven or eight Connelly books in a row before stopping - after the great ones I found came the dross and eventually I realised I'd burned through the good

and went elsewhere to other writers. I returned here and there for the new books - Nine Dragons, The Reversal - but they weren't as good and after The Fifth Witness, which I couldn't bear to finish it was so bad, I gave up on Connelly for good.

Until now. Three years later and I thought it might be worth checking in with Connelly again - maybe he'd gotten the crap out of his system and he was back to producing quality thrillers like Lincoln Lawyer/Echo Park? I was wrong. He's remained as bad as I remembered.

In one of the later Bosch books I remember Harry talking about retiring, and maybe he did, so I was shocked to see he's still working in the LAPD! How old is he now, 80-something? Wasn't he 'Nam? So apparently Bosch can't retire because Connelly can't come up with another wafer-thin character. Harry's now working cold cases, which is what ancient cops do, investigating the case of a mariachi who was shot ten years ago and only recently succumbed to his injuries.

This leads to an even older case dating back twenty years which involves bank robbers, an orphanage fire, and a grudge from his new partner, Lucy Soto, who coincidentally happened to be the sole survivor of the fire.

I don't know about you but that "story" doesn't grab me. It feels like background detail to a sub-plot rather than the main for a 400 page book! Connelly does his level best to ensure no excitement is gleaned from this case as Bosch and Soto look through stacks of old paperwork, interview former cops and witnesses, and basically twiddle their thumbs the entire time. Every aspect of their procedures are described in tedious detail by Connelly.

Bosch can be an interesting character, like in Echo Park, but here he's a complete blank. He's an experienced cop with know-how and nothing else. He doesn't offer, personality, character, clever dialogue, or much of anything. He plods through this police procedural with zero charisma and total wonder from this reader as to why anyone would feel any connection to him. Not that any of the other characters are much better but the central character ought to be the focus for a reason.

I'm not one to say that the ending is critical to the success of a crime novel, but the ending to this was particularly terrible - and the "journey" of the novel itself was so uneventful and worthless that if the ending had read like Connelly had made any effort, it might've been slightly better to read. Without giving too much away, Bosch meets a character who he thinks dunit and another character says something like "You don't think he did it did you?" and Bosch says no - and then at the end it turns out he did do it! Connelly chose the most obvious and least satisfying conclusion to his novel. What happened to his imagination!?

If you're paid by the word, or quantity, of a manuscript over the quality, you're called a hack writer, and the way Connelly grinds out these awful novels year after year, same page length, same bad stories with the same tired character, I'd have to say that nowadays he fits the bill. The Burning Room is one of the dullest crime novels you'll ever read. The fact that this is labelled a "thriller" is a joke. Connelly is worth reading but I'd seek out Echo Park and The Lincoln Lawyer over his latter day drek.

Obsidian says

I am hard cringing at how much I disliked this book. I feel bad for it, I feel like it tried really hard and all I can keep saying is that it needs to do better. There are continuity problems galore, the fact that even though

the years are passing (it's been at least 3-4 years since the last book) that Bosch and his daughter Maddie are still the same age. We have Bosch investigating two cases (not related) and he stupidly gets in trouble for something that was not necessary at all except that I think Connally wanted it that way. There are way too many police/science facts in this one. It felt like Connally wanted to re-explain everything to a new reader who had never read a Bosch book before. I am usually a fan of every book needs to stand alone. But in this case, it's an ongoing series, if you start with book #19 and get completely lost, that's on you. I just found myself becoming more and more bored just reading about every little thing related to two separate cases.

Let's get to it shall we?

In "The Burning Room" we have Bosch more than a year away from being done with his DROP (when he will have to retire from the LAPD and leave the Open/Unsolved unit he is part of) and he is starting to wonder why is he still plugging away at cases when the LAPD as he knows it has changed. Honestly, Bosch reminds me a bit of Poirot in the last couple of Poirot books. Poirot/Bosch both feel like they are still the smartest men around. Based on the last few books, you get the sense that Bosch believes he is the only one that cares about a murderer being brought to justice. And if he doesn't do everything involved with a case, it will end up fouled up. Bosch still doesn't get computers and hates how the police force has become more tech savvy and that people don't go out and knock on doors anymore. Connally implies via Bosch that the police have gotten more lazy as more sophisticated methods have come into play via forensic science. Considering the fact that in the end someone gets killed (that didn't have to) because Bosch talked to someone he shouldn't have, one wonders if maybe Bosch wouldn't have been better tied to a desk.

Bosch also has a new partner in this one named Lucia Soto. Lucia we find is promoted up the ranks after a shootout involving her and her now dead partner. Lucia jumps over several other detectives to take a prime seat at Open/Unsolved with Bosch. If the book had focused on resentment from Bosch or others towards Lucia it would have been a better book. Instead Bosch opines about it, but honestly, that has nothing to do with anything. I felt there was a lot of that in this book.

If you are waiting to hear about where David Chu went, too bad. He is never mentioned at all. And speaking of Chu, we have some continuity errors here when Bosch speaks to Soto about previous partners. Bosch only references one partner getting shot and recovering (Kiz) and another one who killed himself (Sheenan who we know didn't kill himself, he was murdered). But Bosch doesn't bring up Iggy at all which I found cold. And he also doesn't mention Chu or J. Edgar.

Between the partner continuity issues and the ever increasing Maddie doesn't age at all in these books, I wish that Connally would start tracking things a bit better. I have no idea how Maddie is only 17 in this book when at least 3-4 years has passed since the last book in the series, "The Black Box" when she was 15. And somehow Bosch never dances towards more than late 50s in these books. He has to be at least 64 years old at the time of this book. Okay, moving on.

There are not a lot of interesting people in this one I found. There is no real development with Soto beyond why she's interested in one case. We find out that Harry's long term girlfriend dumped him between books due to him not supporting her son's parole. Which honestly, who was this woman who didn't know that wasn't going to happen? I think that Harry and Hannah had an interesting relationship and I hate that everything dealing with it happened off screen. But hey, we have another potential love interest in this one who I felt blah about.

We do get two people who reappear in this one from prior books. We get to see Rachel Walling again. I really want her to just tell Bosch to shove off since he only calls when he wants something. It appears that

Rachel is happy and in a relationship though. We have a former Open/Unsolved detective (Jackson) that was in the last book giving Harry some details and that's about it.

I wasn't grabbed by the two cases that Lucia and Bosch were investigating. I thought that in both cases the solutions came about just a bit too easily, ie. in one case someone told them how/why someone was killed and then all they do is do research/interview to confirm this person's account. I don't get why Bosch held things back from his commander (I never get that) and at one point Bosch stupidly breaks into someone's office for a freaking case file because he couldn't wait until the next day to get it from that person. I honestly felt like most of this book was just a set-up to get to the next book in the Bosch series.

The writing was repetitive. If you want to read about how Bosch looks on in horror at something, enjoy. If you want to read about how Bosch doesn't know how to use computers and depended on his partners to be in charge of all of that, enjoy. If you want to read about Bosch's constant guilt about not being around for his daughter (and honestly not changing any of his habits to be there more), enjoy.

The flow was off from beginning to end. Connelly can usually juggle two cases and make them pop. But honestly, there was just too much happening that were separate from each other to focus on the story that Connelly wants to tell in this one.

I thought the endings to both cases was a disappointment. Especially because Bosch's actions end up costing him a bit too much at the end of this book.

Brenda says

Detective Harry Bosch was watching the autopsy of a man who had just died from complications following a gunshot wound he had received ten years previously. The perpetrators were never caught – hence the investigation of this particular cold case was different to any other Harry had worked on. He was an active member of the LAPD's Open-Unsolved unit, and the satisfaction of solving a crime which was sometimes decades old was great.

The department had recently implemented a policy to partner new detectives with the seasoned ones – Bosch found himself with Detective Lucia Soto as his new partner and though initially he had doubts about her suitability it didn't take long for him to realize that Lucy would make a fine detective.

As they began their investigation, the retrieval of the bullet which had been lodged in the ten year victim's spine was an exciting start. Digging back through the archives, interviewing the available detectives who were on the original case; suddenly they were discovering secrets which had the potential to become highly political. Keeping a lid on some of their information was vital – with the senior brass and the media coming down hard on the detective team, they had to be extremely careful. As Lucy and Harry found their days blurring into nights, the thrill of expectation was riding high. Would all their hard work pay off? And would they solve this strange and very different cold case? "*Don't open the door to the burning room*"

Brilliant! I absolutely loved this latest episode in the Harry Bosch series – Michael Connelly is up there with the best in the business! The pace in this novel was fast, with full on action all the way. The unexpectedness of some of the twists and turns was great. I had a hard time putting this one down. I always enjoy Harry Bosch – he's a great character. But I really enjoyed Lucy too – she brought a breath of fresh air to the LAPD. I have no hesitation in recommending *The Burning Room* highly.

With thanks to TRR and the publisher for my copy to read and review.

Jason says

I picked this up because Jodie Archer (researcher) has it listed in the Top-5 novels that her super-scientific algorithm determined was destined to be a bestseller. And, this book was a bestseller. So I thought, let's take a look-see.

I wasn't particularly blown away by this book. It took about 200 pages until I finally became interested in the characters, especially the secondary characters. The main character, Harry Bosch, is interesting enough. However, I'm pretty sure I would have benefit from having read the previous 18 Harry Bosch novels prior to this one, because I felt like there was a lot to him that I didn't know that would have made this more interesting for me to read. Partly that's my own fault. I suppose you can't jump into the middle of a series and expect to know everything about a character who's been there for a long time.

But, I also just got bored. For 200 pages I didn't *suspect* anyone. It took Connelly a long time to start giving me secondary characters to suspect as being guilty in this crime novel. I rather more enjoy a novel that gives me someone to suspect really early on, without all the pretence and buildup.

Connelly is good at describing a scene. He's very detail oriented. Sometimes this works for me, but in this novel I found it took away from the pace of the novel. Often, good pace was suddenly brought to a halt so that he could describe a specific setting or scene for a whole page. I think this works better in worlds that are created where an author needs to show us the new world. This took place mainly in LA, however, and even if you haven't been to LA, you don't need a ton of description to know the place.

The plot was interesting. A man dies ten years after a bullet strikes him in the spine. And suddenly a decade-old crime becomes a homicide. I really enjoyed the interdepartmental conflict that Connelly depicts in the novel. He creates good tension among the other detectives and officers, and I find this really delightful to read. I mean, who doesn't have conflict with at least one coworker in their lives? In that sense, Connelly is very good at realism. Everything about this felt *real*, as though I could have been watching a Dateline special.

As a writer, Connelly is skilled. He's no Stephen King, who has a seemingly inhuman ability with words. But Connelly is a good writer, particularly with dialogue, and it was unfortunate that he didn't employ more dialogue here.

In all, I think the main reason this book didn't work for me was my expectations going in. I expected more of a thriller type novel, and what I got was a slower, detail-oriented crime novel. In hindsight, given that Connelly is a crime writer, I should've known better. Duh!

James Thane says

Ten years ago, a mariachi musician was shot and critically wounded in what the police then assumed was a drive-by shooting, perhaps a stray bullet from a gang-related incident. When the musician dies, with the

bullet still lodged against his spine, his death is ruled a homicide and the ten-year-old case falls to Detective Harry Bosch of the LAPD's Open-Unsolved unit and Bosch's young new partner, Lucy Soto.

Harry is still getting to know Soto, who is known as "Lucky" Lucy and whose rapid rise through the department was accelerated by her heroic action in a shoot-out with armed robbers that left her partner dead. He's not yet sure whether she's detective-grade material or not and will be watching her closely.

Their only real chance of solving the murder rests on the hope that new technology will provide them leads that were unavailable to the team of detectives that first investigated the shooting. In particular, will it be possible to enhance the video that was taken that day so as to provide additional information about the crime?

As Harry and Lucy begin digging into the investigation, Harry discovers that Lucy is secretly conducting an investigation of her own into another old cold case involving a fire that took the lives of several children and a caretaker at an unlicensed day-car center. The case has great personal relevance for Soto, and Harry has to decide whether to shut down her efforts or assist her in attempting to solve this case as well. All of this is of tremendous personal importance to Bosch as well, because he's coming up against his mandatory retirement date and in less than a year will have to leave the LAPD for good. He is determined to go out on a high note.

The result is another excellent entry in what is probably the best police procedural series being written today. By now the Bosch character has been firmly set and Harry remains as grimly dedicated to the cause of justice and as fiercely determined to do things as he sees fit as he has been for some time now. Soto is a great addition to the cast and is one of the most interesting people with whom Bosch has ever been partnered. The cases involved are complex and interesting and the sum of it all will keep readers turning the pages of this book long into the night. One closes the book desperately hoping that Michael Connelly will somehow be able to keep Harry on the job for years to come in spite of his looming retirement date.

Michael says

A Connelly read for me is like opening a Christmas present, a special treat that quickens my heart (and then leaves me sad because it's all over until next year). Los Angeles police detective Harry Bosch here is working the cold case squad in his last year before retirement and is tasked with mentoring a young rising young star, Lucia Soto. They take on a case of a Latino musician apparently shot by a stray bullet ten years before during a mariachi concert and whose recent death from complications makes it a homicide. Analysis of street camera footage with modern high tech suggests a fellow musician on the stage that night might have expected the attack, but this man has disappeared. His affair with the wife of a powerful construction magnate and financial backer of a popular former Hispanic mayor makes for a tricky investigation, fraught with the dangers of high-profile politics and potential corruption.

Watching Bosch work the case is a great pleasure due to the sense of realism. Connelly doesn't jerk the reader around with pyrotechnics and gratuitous thriller escapades. The story is mostly about his relationship with Soto, who is trying to prove herself after a recent case where a heroic shootout has made her male colleagues jealous over early promotions and media accolades. Bosch has to work hard to restrain her eager beaver efforts to succeed and make sure this will not become another partner he loses to the dangers of a mistake. When he discovers she was motivated to join the police from her childhood experience as a survivor of an arson case that led to many deaths at a project apartment complex, he is empathetic and begins helping on that cold case on the side. Slowly there emerges some intriguing links between this presumed gang-

related crime and an armed robbery at a cash checking business on the same day three blocks away.

The expert juggling of these cases was a fun to experience with the master and his apprentice. As Bosch trains her in tradecraft, he has some real challenges with the gray areas such as improper shortcuts with intelligence gathering, negotiating the political ass-covering of their desk jockey supervisors, and effective harnessing of journalists they are forbidden to disclose case information with. Missing are the noirish elements of Bosch as the lone coyote in a dark world of social decay and police corruption. His home life with his teenaged daughter Maddie is upbeat and good counterpoint to the tension of his cases.

L.A. Starks says

Since this is one of the monthly picks for the Mystery, Crime & Thriller Goodreads group, I won't say much except that it was an excellent choice. Connelly's books are so humane and this one is no exception. The ending is....well, you'll have to read it and see.

Liz Barnsley says

I honestly do not know where the time goes, here we are already at the 19th outing for one of my favourite Literary detectives Harry Bosch, boy he's had some ups and downs over the years, but every single adventure has been pretty much pitch perfect and the same goes for this one.

“Don’t open the door to the burning room”

Still looking at cold cases, Harry and new partner Lucia find themselves a hot potato – when a man who was shot many years earlier finally dies, this case starts with a bullet and pretty much shoots you off in all directions from there in another rollercoaster ride of suspense and action with all of Mr Connolly's trademark twists and turns. I have to say this is one of my favourite Bosch novels of the last few years – I may even have to give it top billing which previously went to “City of Bones” – Mainly I think because of the addition of Lucia, a terrifically well drawn and likeable character who injects a new lease of life into an already pretty vigorous series.

It is quite hard to review an ongoing series of this calibre by taking one novel, this current one and trying to get across how readable and accessible it is – certainly Harry's story has been a long and extremely engaging one, but you could pick this up and read it in a vacuum easily enough as you could any of the others. However I would say there is a lot to be gained by starting from the beginning with The Black Echo and following Harry on his highly entertaining and eclectic journey – and perhaps stopping to meet Jack McEvoy, Terry McCaleb and Mickey Haller along the way – and oh the pure joy of getting to a book that features more than one of these excellent protagonists at once.

Overall though, with The Burning Room, Michael Connelly has once again proven that there is plenty of life left in Harry Bosch and has written yet another page turner of the highest order. The ending was unexpected and clever, making me absolutely desperate to find out what is next for those that inhabit this world – and I have no hesitation at all in recommending this series highly for all fans of Crime Fiction and indeed any fan of a darn good yarn. If you haven't met Harry yet where have you been?

Happy Reading Folks!

Pamela says

OK. This is it. I'm done, done, and done with Harry Bosch and done with Michael Connelly.

"The Drop" was boring and derivative.

"The Black Box" was even more so.

This one can only be described as a stinking waste of time. The plot(s) are unintriguing and predictable. The characters are tissue thin.

And the writing....the writing is flat, uninspired, and mind-numbingly boring. Seriously. The writing is ridiculous. There is nothing even remotely resembling a spark of creativity in the words. To call it workaday is a compliment. I have read instruction manuals that exhibit more heart and feeling than this mess.

What's more, it is so boring and uninspired that apparently neither Connelly nor his editor could be bothered to read it themselves. Here's an example of what I mean:

A character asks: "...Mr. Ojeda. Am I saying that right, Detective Soto? The J like an H?"

Nothing wrong with that you say. Nothing at all. Nope. Nothing wrong except that a few lines above, Detective Soto spoke the name.

Things like this drive me up the wall. It is not right that I spend my time (and money) reading a book that no one who is making money off my reading the book can take the time to read.

As I said, I'm done.

Liz says

I've been a fan of Connelly and Harry Bosch for years. The books are always decent, some are down right brilliant. This one is well told mystery, if nothing special. There are two different cold cases that Bosch and his new partner Soto are trying to solve. As always seems to be the case with mysteries, you keep waiting to see when they will intersect. The ending was a little far fetched, but it tied up the loose ends for the reader. I liked the interplay between Bosch and Soto, as she is a newbie and he is looking to provide her with the benefit of his experience.

I listened to the audio version and the narrator did a good job.

Paula Kalin says

Wow, am I thankful I started reading Harry Bosch again. The Burning Room, # 19 in the series, is very well

done. I recently finished Michael Connelly's latest The Wrong Side of Goodbye which was outstanding. Not knowing where to start back into the series, I decided to jump into when he is about to retire.

The Burning Room pairs veteran Harry Bosch with newly promoted Lucy Soto. She's smart and quite likable. I love the way Harry shows her the ropes in a kind and gentle manner. The technical aspect of Connelly's books is terrific. Very detail driven.

I also started the Amazon series, Bosch, which stars Titus Welliver, the narrator for the audiobooks. He has a great voice. The show is decent. I will be continuing with both.

Thanks to GRF James for bringing me back to this great series.

5 out of 5 stars
