



Capitol Murder

Phillip Margolin

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Private investigator Dana Cutler and attorney Brad Miller have overcome more than a few daunting challenges and powerful enemies to see justice done. Against tremendous odds, they successfully unmasked an American president's involvement in a chain of murders. They also saved the life of a Supreme Court justice while foiling a conspiracy by rogue members of the CIA to fix a case headed for the court.

Now wicked threats old and new are about to bring them together once again. Convicted serial killer Clarence Little has escaped from death row in Oregon, and Brad receives threatening messages in D.C., where he is working for Senator Jack Carson, a high-ranking member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. A dead body, murdered according to Little's M.O., is found in the senator's Georgetown home, and Carson has disappeared. While Dana is in Oregon digging into Carson's shady background, a terrorist cell is poised to destroy a packed professional football stadium in one of the biggest attacks on American soil. As the senator's personal life begins to dovetail with the cell's evil plan, Brad and Dana will risk it all again to uncover the truth and save their country.

Phillip Margolin proves once more that he is a true master of suspense, delivering another high-octane thriller set in Washington's legendary corridors of power. Capitol Murder's breathtaking pace and electrifying twists will have old fans and newcomers racing to the final, stunning page.

Capitol Murder Details

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Author : Phillip Margolin

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From Reader Review Capitol Murder for online ebook

Michael says

In "Capitol Murder," Phillip Margolin uses a three pronged approach to his story.

Serial killer, Clarence Little, kills and mutilates young women. One of the cases he was found guilty for, is overturned due to faulty evidence. The other cases will then be reviewed.

Brad Miller is an attorney who was active in overturning Little's conviction. He begins getting notes from Little and then learns that Little has escaped.

The next segment of the story has to do with a terrorist plot on a football stadium in Washington, D.C. during a Monday night football game.

The final segment deals with Miller's new boss in Washington, D.C. Jack Carson is a senator from Oregon. He has unusual sexual fetishes and will do anything to keep his sexual activity a secret.

The story comes together nicely with some interesting plot twists. Brad Miller and P.I. Dana Cutler are likable characters who are entertaining.

The ending was a bit too convenient and the idea of a football stadium as the goal of a terrorist plot has been used. However, the story kept my interest right up to the action packed conclusion.

Bob Mustin says

I sometimes read this sort of genre stuff; it has many readers, and I often find myself wondering what I've missed. Once again - and at the risk of seeming a snob - I find I haven't missed all that much. In such books, the characters are an inch deep, the prose is often more than clunky, and the stories are filled with gratuitous sex and violence. Capitol Murder is no exception. Here, there's a terroristic plot to kill lots of U.S. citizens, with more-than-mild corruption and intrigue within Federal government organizations. About story specifics I won't say more.

All this leads me to wonder what draws people to read such books:

- First, I think, there's the sex and violence. We Americans, who deny ourselves a lot of sexual impulses, seem inordinately drawn to vicarious, cathartic violence.
- Then there're the gut-level actions and reactions of the characters, these appealing to the baser instincts of readers. We seem compelled, when confronted with unfairness and trouble, to seek out our inner animal and to enjoy those instinctive reactions on the page, rather than cheering for higher-minded responses.
- But the primary draw here is the twists and turns of plot. Readers enjoy trying to outthink the writer as he or she unearths plots, murders, terroristic acts, and the like. And Margolin does provide this, along with a fairly accurate depiction of Washington D.C., both political and architectural.

What's bad about such books is that they do a good job of inflaming gut-level passions against various governmental organs while paradoxically inflating the U.S.'s moral base against other nations, against supposed enemy groups, and even against various religions. In other words, they're doing FOX News' work for them.

This is hardly literature, working as it does against the elevation of the human spirit. It really does, you see:

these books take intelligence, the human capability that brought on the Enlightenment, and employ it in the cause of our baser natures. Still, the level of intelligence at work in such writing is remarkable. I can only bemoan that it isn't put to more constructive use.

Connie says

This is another fast paced book that grabs you from the first page and keeps you going until the end. Dana Cutler is only part of this book as there are a lot of different things going on in this book. Mr. Margolin knows how to build characters and you will either hate them or love them.

I like that this one took place in Oregon, where I am originally from and then in Washington DC. Some of the places I recognize and I like that I can identify with places or have been there.

I am giving this 5 out of 5 stars.

Shawn Steketee says

I received this book as a give away from Goodreads. I really enjoyed this book, the story is suspenseful and interesting. The characters are likable, so likable that I'm planning read his other stories about them. If you enjoy intrigue and crime novels, you will enjoy this one. On the surface the story is about an attempted terrorist attack, it's really about the interactions and motivations of the various characters.

Mike says

I had not read a Margolin novel in some time and was quickly reminded of his typical formula.

Margolin has the right recipes for a great thriller mystery: realistic setting, aggressive characters, twisting plots, cliffhangers, apathetic villains...

However, in my opinion, it's how he stirs these ingredients that somewhat annoy me. These books, Capitol Murder no exception, are seemingly several short stories written separately but then weaved together in an attempt to tie a mutual conclusion.

Somehow it works but it's painful getting there. Especially when characters (oh so many characters you truly cannot keep up) are asking questions the Reader was told the answer to chapters ago. Also there's the repetitiveness side effect played here.

I have read maybe 5 Margolins but I challenge this author to attempt to write one novel with one central main character without bouncing around to ten other POVs. (Most of such POVs clearly created to fill pages).

Good novel but I'm going to diet from his recipe for a bit.

Matt says

While it has been a while since I read the last book in the installment, I quite enjoyed the book and Margolin's split plot. It was quite easy to get ensconced and I found myself wanting to read 'just a little more', so much so that I sped through the book in a short time. Margolin is to be applauded not only for his description, but also the use of dialogue and accuracy that is lost in so many terrorist-centred books.

I found myself wanting to get to the root of how two seemingly independent stories could really come together so nicely. While not a stellar sewing together, the plots do eventually merge. The minor plot (I wish not to tip my hand for those reading this before reading the book) does appear as though it will be the only one, with the eventual major storyline creeping in from being background narration to the crux of the book. Margolin does very well in juggling the plots, characters, ideas, and narration, so the reader's interest remains strong.

Good work, Mr. Margolin. I cannot wait to sink my teeth into the next book, though I am sure it is a while off.

Mary says

Private investigator Dana Cutler and attorney Brad Miller have been partners on several challenging and high-profile cases together. They have had to overcome countless difficulties and have made a variety of extremely powerful enemies over the course of their careers. Against such tremendous odds, Dana and Brad have always done their best to see that justice prevails. Now a series of wicked threats old and new are about to reunite them once again.

Brad Miller is distressed to learn that the death penalty sentences of a convicted serial killer have recently been reversed. As a result, it seems that Brad's former client Clarence Little may be able to appeal his multiple murder convictions. However, Brad is absolutely certain that any judge who hears the trials could not possibly overturn any of his convictions; that just would never happen.

Brad is currently living in D. C., working as the legislative assistant to Senator Jack Carson, a high-ranking member of the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence. When several hand-addressed letters are delivered to Brad's office as well as to his apartment, he is horrified to discover that Clarence Little has begun writing to him. Although none of his letters are overtly threatening, they still contain just enough personal information about Brad and his family to be genuinely disturbing. It seems that even from an Oregon jail cell, Clarence Little has somehow found a new way to torment people.

Brad becomes utterly terrified for himself and his new wife when a dead body is found in Senator Carson's upscale Georgetown home. The body exhibits all the hallmarks of someone who is a victim of Clarence Little, and the senator himself has disappeared. If this isn't actually the gruesome handiwork of Clarence Little, who could possibly be doing all this?

Meanwhile back in Oregon, where Dana Cutler is investigating the senator's shady background, a terrorist

cell is poised to destroy a packed professional football stadium in one of the largest attacks on American soil. As the senator's personal life begins to dovetail with the terrorist cell's evil plan, Brad and Dana find themselves in danger once again. They must risk everything to uncover the truth and save their country.

I must say that although I may have read some of Phillip Margolin's novels in the past, I know that I haven't read books from any of his series. That being said, I still found this book to be surprisingly well-written. I enjoyed it very much, even though this isn't necessarily the typical genre that I would choose to read for myself. The story was still intriguing and fast-paced; I would definitely give this book an A!

Mike Gabor says

Luckily I borrowed this book from the library rather than buying it because if I did purchase it I would definitely be asking for a refund. I don't know what the author was thinking but some of the characters in this book act so stupidly it is beyond belief. I've read a few other books by this author and while they weren't masterpieces at least they had a believable plot and characters. I strongly, strongly suggest you take a pass on this book.

Shelley says

Highly improbable and convoluted with at least 7 main characters. A decent story was obscured by telling it from so many points of view and having the individual story lines intersect. I might read another one of his books (not sure if I have), but not the two with these same characters. The characters aren't remotely likeable and have inconsistent personalities or none at all.

Jay Connor says

Phillip Margolin has completed his Washington trilogy – “Executive Privilege,” “Supreme Justice” and, now, “Capitol Murder” – without lead characters. Brad, Ginny and Dana are rather plot pivots; their insertion in this story is to connect and bridge one incoherence to a coincidence to the next non-sequitor.

Despite this, Margolin is an interesting storyteller with enough forward propulsion to keep us engaged. The trouble begins when we ask: “engaged in what?”

Over the arc of this trilogy we have seen two Oregonian politicians – a president and a senator – mimic the MO of a serial killer in an attempt to cover their sexual excesses. In the middle, Margolin's trilogy-spanning zelig, Brad Miller, saves the Supreme Court, all the while looking to settle down to the quiet life with fair Ginny

I had given up on Philip Margolin after a series of particularly gruesome outings with the lead Amanda Jaffe character. This despite really enjoying his plotting and pacing in several novels beginning with his break out: "Gone, but not Forgotten."

With "Capitol Murder," the jury is still out

Erma Steppe says

I just finished "Capital Murder" by Phillip Margolin and loved it! This is the first book of his I've read, but my roommate has read every book he's written, beginning with Heartstone." She told me not to start it unless I had nothing else to do and WOW, she was right. Thank you for allowing me to read your book; I'm putting you on my list of favorite authors.

Mihir says

Full review originally at Fantasy Book Critic

OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS: Phillip Margolin is a favorite of mine, I started reading his books nearly a decade ago and since then I have enjoyed his Amanda Jaffe books as well as his standalone titles. He began a trilogy with a set of characters in 2008 with Executive Privilege; he followed it up two years later with Supreme Justice and last year he capped off the trilogy with Capitol Murder.

Like all of his books, Capitol Murder has quite a few plot threads and a large character cast as well. The story begins after a few months after the events of Supreme Justice and Brad and Ginny are well settled of sorts in their routines. Dana Cutler is facing an ironic turn of events due to the newfound celebrity status that she has achieved. One of the main threads of Executive Privilege is carried forward in the form of Clarence little who is now obsessed with Brad as he owes him for his current situation. There's also Ali who is a new migrant and planning to shake the USA by trying to be a jihadi martyr. Lastly there's the plot-thread involving Jack Carson, the Oregon senator for whom Brad works for and is now undergoing quite a situation thanks to some shady dealing on his part. There's a lot more but this is the basic gist of this complicated plot and once again Margolin proves why he's one of the best thriller writers who's is equally under-appreciated.

This book is more tuned to the events of the first book than the second one and I appreciated this aspect as we get to see a continuation of events that were such a major plot point in Executive Privilege. In this book the significant others to Dana and Brad get more page time as well and in Ginny's case she actually plays a crucial role in the events that play out. With a such large character cast, the author's characterization skills often come in to play and with a writer like Phillip Margolin, its almost second nature to him. The book's pace and plot twists are top notch and keep the reader thoroughly engrossed. From the start the reader is introduced to a multitude of characters as well as multiple plot threads. Teach of the plot threads start separately and will have the reader vexed in trying to figure out how they all come together.

The plot is characteristically twisted and comes together in the end in a very cohesive fashion and in this category; it overshadows Supreme Justice by being the better thriller and possibly is the best one of this entire trilogy. Not having any drawback to it is another plus point and so this is another winner from the incredible mind of Phillip Margolin. This book comes very recommended for thriller fans and for those wanting to read a good story with terrific mystery threads.

Julie Christine says

Not my usual fare, but it got me through a night of insomnia. Good airplane read. Be prepared to suspend sorts of disbelief.

tiddle says

The book starts out well, and I enjoy the initial 1/3 of it. But then, instead of plots thickening, I fast realize that the plots are really so tenuously held together that it leaves a lot to be desired. *Spoiler alert* Once the serial killer escapes after killing off his defense attorney, among others, he suddenly drops from the book, only to resurface towards the end to becoming the "good guy" to save the day. And the befuddled plot to try to paint the AWOL Special Force guy as the is-he-or-is-he-not spy, it's only in the very last paragraph, buried deep in the epilogue, that he really isn't.

One would have hoped, that perhaps the author has not tried to get too smart, and to try so desperate to weave so many parallel tracks of plots that really can be pared down some, so that each of them can be dealt with in much more details, it would have been more fun and intriguing. As it is now, when I finally finish reading the book, I'm, like, seriously? Dana Cutler's character would have had more nuance, rather than the passing references that, yes she's tough, but we don't really see much of it. Ginny Striker's character can be made more interesting, but she's much reduced due to the need to cover other characters like Clarence Little and Millie Reston that are total filler. If only we can focus on either the serial killer, and the terrorist plot, it might have been much more satisfying.

Granted, it's decent writing, with an easy-to-read style that reminds me of Jeffrey Archer. That's the 3-star saving grace for this book.

Will says

READER'S SUBJECTIVE REVIEW FOLLOWS:

All in all, not a bad read. If I had to grumble, I'd say the plot behind the US intelligence operation is so masqueraded that the reader doesn't even know it's there until the last 50 pages of the book. The constant juxtaposition of the Clarence Little serial killer case with the jihadist plot to blow up FedEx Field is a bit disconcerting and quite frankly confuses the reader as to which form of terror--personal or cataclysmic--is the focal point of the book. Having said that, it wasn't a bad investment as a \$5.98 markdown at B&N.

SPOILER PLOT SUMMARY FOLLOWS:

The Plot to take Down FedEx Field in DC. A US soldier in Afghanistan gets separated from his unit which is wiped out and he is declared dead. He finds his way to Pakistan and becomes friendly with the jihadists, and is soon center stage for a terrorist plot to blow up Redskins Stadium during a game. On the US front, several players are involved with providing support and money via shady enterprises. SEN Jack Carson has hired Brad Miller to be his staff researcher but he is soon drawn into the findings of friend Dana Cutler who is investigating Carson's peccadilloes for Exposed magazine. When the FedEx plot is discovered and smashed, the Feds snatch Ron Tolliver before his handler can kill him. Dana is hired to provide background

investigation for well heeled DC attorney Bobby Schatz after he takes on Tolliver as a client. The FBI screw up and record part of an attorney-client conversation that Ginny Striker finds while filing FBI reports away. She gets a copy to Dana and Tolliver is ultimately released from prison. Parallel to this, serial killer Clarence Little is released from prison when his case is appealed and he begins cleaning up loose ends from his past. He shows up at the 11th hour to save Brad and SEN Carson when the jihadist cleanup man Mustafa is about to kill them at Carson's home. Carson is humiliated by the evidence of his sadistic sexual past as well as his aid's knowledge of the FedEx plot. When Dana discovers treachery in the way she and Ginny were placed in their positions, she confronts the coconspirators of the caper. Ron Tolliver was the CIA's mole inside the jihadist cell, while Rafik Nasrallah was their mole inside of the jihadists. After Tollison's arrest, he had to be sprung from incarceration, so Emil Ibanescu asked Bobby Schatz to represent Tolliver, go to the DoJ and confront Terry Crawford that he was Tolliver's lawyer. Crawford expected Ginny to slip the interrogation screw-up to Dana, and then Shatz could have his client released on prosecutorial misconduct. Dana confronts the trio in NYC to insure that her friend Ginny is not made the sacrificial lamb in the whole affair.
