Personal Injuries Short Guide

Personal Injuries by Scott Turow

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Characters

Robert Feaver, universally known as Robbie, is the most interesting and complex character in the novel and clearly Turow's main interest as a psychological type adapted to a legal subspecialty. Robbie is an almost stereotypical (and almost literal) ambulance chaser, a shameless self-promoter who has taught himself to weep on cue in emergency rooms over the injustices dealt to prospective clients. He shades the truth as a matter of practice and is a frustrated thespian whose approach is Method acting, training he puts to good use in attracting clients and winning in court. He has a long argument with Evon, who accuses him of having no core beliefs; for Robbie, everything is a "Play," by which he means a psychological or emotional manipulation to gain advantage. Evon, still a believer in moral absolutes despite her distance from formal religiosity, is appalled by Robbie's relativism but is unable to counter his arguments, and she is emotionally swayed by the elemental attraction to him most people feel. She also sees that despite his lack of an ethical belief system he does good along the way, though sometimes somewhat randomly. At first Evon regards Robbie as a near psychopath, someone unable to empathize with others, but she comes to see just the reverse, that Robbie is empathetic to a fault— he simply sees no contradiction between feeling for others and pursuing his own interests. He is the novel's greatest achievement, an unforgettable marriage of contradictory elements, a character almost existential in his ability to operate without illusions. Evon is constantly surprised at his unanticipated depths, his spontaneity, his ability to think fast on his feet and reinvent himself. In an amusing scene, an unemotional FBI man hugs Robbie, calling him the best confidential informant he has ever worked with, the very best.

Evon Miller (undercover name; she is really DeDe Kurzweil), along with her superior, Jim McManis, are the FBI agents running Robbie as a confidential informant.

As noted above, Evon grew up in a conservative religious community and is initially somewhat literal-minded about moral issues, with right and wrong clearly demarcated. Her continuing encounters with Robbie and her observations of the many ethical complexities involved in the Petros Project sting lead her to a new identity by the end of the novel: working undercover wipes out identity to begin with, and rather than returning to her unfulfilling life as a Des Moines Special Agent, she consciously becomes someone different. By helping Rainey through her final agonies, Evon has stepped into Robbie's morally relativistic world; by accepting herself as gay and eventually finding a female lover, she breaks with the rigid roles her family and even her loving sister have required of her. She is changed by Robbie, as is everyone in the book.

Stan Sennett and George Mason should be discussed together, for though Stan is originally Robbie's antagonist, they become wary coworkers striving for a common goal, collecting reliable evidence on the bribed judges—Stan for the sake of justice and personal glory, Robbie to stay out of jail.

George Mason, however, has always served as both friend and antagonist to Sennett.

Classmates in law school, they have served different masters—Sennett the uncompromising strictures of the prosecutor, George the messy mistress of compromise. Stan's relatively modest background fuels his ambition and feeds his sense of entitlement: why should others be cut slack when he never enjoyed much leeway? In contrast, George's quasi-aristocratic Virginia upbringing leads to a certain noblesse oblige, a feeling that he should serve a common good and tolerate ambiguity. Worst of all, Stan, in George's eyes, is more forceful, more ruthless, more successful than he is—he is even a more committed jogger! George's final triumph over Stan is another victory for ambiguity over true belief, and George himself is a fine choice as a narrator of events, although he falters somewhat when he shifts into Even's imagined point of view.

Brendan Tuohey is a stock figure, the Irish cop turned political judge and ward boss, but his inner life remains somewhat obscure, necessarily so since he is the canny target who gives nothing away. He is well drawn, but mainly from the outside, since few have access to his inner being. More vivid are some of his fellow judges on the take, especially the pathetic Barnert Skolnick, so dim-witted his politically connected brother, "Knuckles," put him on the bench because he didn't have the sense to practice law. A quarter of a century later he is no smarter, attempting to give back a bribe because he feels he didn't earn it. When he is finally pulled in, even FBI agent McManis is pitying, telling Sennett the judge will "croak" if the prosecutor keeps up his relentless badgering. Even more sympathetic is the bluff and aggressive Sherman Crowthers, an African American who has climbed up to the bench through force of will and personality. As in Presumed Innocent, Turow has an eloquent understanding of the forces that impinge upon black jurists and the double standard that condemns the recently enfranchised for doing what their predecessors have done for generations.

Crowthers is a tragic figure.

Social Concerns

Personal Injuries addresses two main social concerns, the rooting out and punishment of judicial corruption and the horrors of a notorious but little-understood fatal disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. Both concerns run throughout the novel, and the contrast between the public issues of bribery and malfeasance and the private suffering from a debilitating disease contrast nicely, both evoking the "personal injuries" of the title. By dramatizing the corruption investigation, Scott Turow pursues a number of agendas, including, as he does in all his works, illuminating the work of courtroom attorneys, highlighting the moral quandaries faced by decent attorneys and clients caught in the grip of ineluctable legal and social forces, and showing how the visible elements of the legal system are no more than iceberg tips compared to the subsurface machinations the public never sees. The ALS concern is clearly meant to raise consciousness about a condition long recognized as "Lou Gehrig's disease" but little understood in its cruel depredation of the body; Turow devotes the bulk of his acknowledgments note to thanking his informants about this "Cruelest Disease" and providing web sites and support-group information.

Judges in Turow's fictional Kindle County, U.S.A., a generic Midwestern town with similarities to Turow's native Chicago and a number of other large cities, are on the take. The ambitious and aggressive U.S.

Attorney, Stan Sennett, has no direct evidence of dishonesty, only the remarkable successes enjoyed by a certain personal injury lawyer, Robbie Feaver, before particular judges, but Sennett is absolutely committed to developing proof. When a slush fund controlled by Feaver lands him in tax trouble with the IRS, the lawyer, facing years in the penitentiary, agrees to become a confidential informant (a "c.i." in FBI jargon) for Sennett, who devises a Justice Department-FBI sting operation. Project Petros, named for an uncle of Sennett's bankrupted by Kindle County corruption, is a version of the famed Washington ABSCAM operation of 1978-1980, a sting run by the FBI against Congressmen and other government employees. The Kindle County version will attempt to get the goods on judges paid for favorable verdicts out of Feaver's slush fund; we are led to understand the frustration of the government faced with a certain knowledge of guilt (Feaver has told all, or at least much) but lacking evidentiary trails that can stand up in court (Feaver's testimony unsupported by other evidence will have little credibili ty). The ultimate target is the chief judge, Brendan Tuohey, who is due for promotion into an even more powerful position, but all exchanges of cash have been through middlemen, carefully insulating most of the judges from prosecution.

Sennett's answer is to draw in part on ABSCAM-type high-technology surveillance equipment and sophisticated investigatory methods, including audio recording devices (Robbie agrees to wear a "wire"), television monitoring of cash exchanges, pursuit vehicles equipped to turn on remote recording equipment, teams trained to recover marked bills when the suspects spend them, even a government-owned garbage truck regularly collecting trash from a suspect's back alley to examine it for discarded evidence. The novel is particularly positive about the FBI undercover operatives,

ordinary individuals who give up months and years of their lives to uncomfortable and lonely work, all motivated by a hunger to stop the degradation of the public weal.

The enormous human and financial costs of the investigation are precisely recorded, with the repeated reminder that the public will never know of these sacrifices.

Yet the social costs of allowing corruption to remain unchecked are even higher.

Turow, who has served both as a prosecutor (an assistant U.S. Attorney in Chicago) and a defense attorney, here shows the passion that motivates the government side, repeatedly having characters complain that the corrupt judges and the lawyers and court clerks who aid them have hijacked the legal system from the public. Bribery and malfeasance are so ingrained that one old judge no longer even thinks of himself as doing anything wrong, and he suffers angina when he is finally brought to understand he faces jail time. Justice for the highest bidder even makes honest jurists culpable, as one of the female judges Robbie has had a sexual relation with confirms when she acknowledges an awareness of corruption but cannot bring herself to do anything about it. While Turow's other books have provided insider understanding of the law and its operations, Personal Injuries does a great service in dramatizing the need for aggressive policing of the courts and the sacrifices made and pitfalls encountered by those who choose to dedicate their lives to this unseen and unappreciated activity.

The second concern is more straightforward, making visible and heart-felt the harrowing daily suffering of ALS victims and their families. Personal Injuries does more than any nonfiction news-magazine feature or television report could aspire to in communicating the awful human costs of this disease, which progressively robs sufferers of their ability to walk, then to move any limb, and ultimately to breathe, while leaving their thinking and feeling capacities unchanged. Trapped in ruined bodies, unable finally to communicate except by means of computerized voice synthesizers or eye blinks, ALS victims present a special torture for care givers as well, who must face the question of how long their loved ones wish to be kept alive by artificial means.

(Ninety per cent of patients choose not to be put on ventilators after their lungs can no longer draw air.) Since we know and come to like Robbie Feaver's wife, Rainey, through the course of a long novel, we feel for her far more deeply than we would for a stranger.

Though the novel never addresses the concern directly, it is evident that the typical sufferer from ALS could never receive the high level of care given Rainey Feaver, a consequence of the enormous wealth generated by Robbie's practice. If Rainey's condition is pitiable in spite of twenty-fourhour nursing and copious technological medical equipment, how much worse is it for the average sufferer? Turow, wisely, lets us speculate without belaboring the point, and no sensitive reader will find it easy to ignore the next appeal for more support for sufferers from this disease.

Techniques

Personal Injuries could be technically classified as a legal procedural in the general mystery genre, that is, as a form of suspense story set in courtrooms just as policiers or police procedurals are set in precinct houses or detective bureaus. Looked at formally, the novel certainly fits the popular-culture formula, for it peels back layers of discovery, includes one murder and at least two near-murders, and ends with several dramatic and shocking twists. Turow goes far beyond the basic formula, however, and the writing is at a consistently high level rarely found in popular fiction. Turow's prose style is elegant, employing carefully wrought, sometimes demanding sentences that are nevertheless models of clarity and precision—the temptation is to call them lawyerly, but they are also literary. Dialogue—there is a fair amount—is completely credible without a false note anywhere: the characters speak just as we think they should. In spite of such a large cast, characters are so sharply drawn that there is never any confusion between them. As in his other novels (especially Presumed Innocent), Turow employs frequent metaphors and similes, hazardous forms in clumsy hands, but here a delight for their wit, their precision, their discipline and order. For example, George's outlook on Robbie's character is summed up perfectly when he wonders if "like a slug ... [Robbie] would leave a grease track behind."

An even more telling measure of literary quality is the correspondence between structural devices and the larger thematic concerns and conceptual intentions of the novel. Turow divides his forty-six chapters into three sections, with the first ("The Beginning") and last ("Afterwards") acting as bookends for the interior sections, titled "February," "March," "April," "May," and "June." The first frame chapter establishes the status quo ante, as a lawyer might say, then middle chapters explore the five crucial months of the sting, and the novel ends with a brief description of the final changes wrought. This arrangement duplicates the pace and rhythm of the investigation, paralleling form and content. Turow's technique is nineteenth-century realism, that is, an attempt to create a convincing depiction of a social system at work (here, one slice or element of a whole system), with a focus on the economic and social forces that shape character and drive action. Another classic element from well-written novels is a carefully crafted narrative voice, one which is significant to the themes and plot events.

George Mason's point of view meets these criteria, though one awkwardness is George telling us he will next imagine what happened between Evon and Robbie or between other characters since, despite his role as Robbie's defense attorney, he cannot be present all the time. Sometimes this lapse is covered over by George telling the reader he later learned of these events from Evon.

George's "surmises," "conjectures," and "inferences" may be "the only avenue to the whole truth that the law—and a story— always demand," but direct testimony is always more convincing than hearsay. It might have been less intrusive to simply tell things from Evon's point of view when necessary, removing George as narrator in those sections.

Such minor quibblings aside, the ultimate test of the novel involves the responses evoked by its ending. Personal Injuries leaves the reader with a sense of loss, not because of plot events or the letting go of attractive characters, but because of reluctance to leave the intriguing confines of Kindle County, a place no better than it should be, perhaps, but one full of fascinating details that suggest a real place, somehow very familiar, but also distant. Turow's creation of this imaginary county, with all its complexity and malfeasance, demonstrates a literary perfect pitch, an ear for speech, and a wicked insight into human nature at work in modern urban settings.

Themes

The themes of Personal Injuries arise directly out of its social concerns. Primary is the theme of justice and mercy, incorporated in prosecutor Stan Sennett and defense attorney Robbie Feaver but also manifest in Robbie's defender George Mason and in FBI Special Agent Evon Miller. A second theme concerns love and gender relations put under strain by the high-pressure investigation, the painful relationship of Robbie and Rainey both pre- and post-ALS, and Even's struggle to find her sexual identity in spite of the constrictions of a conservative upbringing and membership in the rigid ranks of the FBI. A third theme might be called forensic epistemology, that is, the problematic question of how we demonstrate what we know to be true (the essential issue addressed by epistemology) before a court of law as proof (the forensic issue). Finally, the novel as a whole comments on ambition, since each character compromises principles and sense of self in order to get ahead in the highly competitive upper-level criminal justice professions.

Stan Sennett sums up the unbending demands of justice unmitigated by mercy.

He shows up on Robbie Feaver's doorstep one evening with three IRS agents and evidence of a slush fund for paying off judges, knowing that he gains irresistible leverage on Robbie since the attorney's wife has Lou Gehrig's disease and his mother is institutionalized with a stroke. Since Robbie is completely devoted to caring for both in person, he will do anything to avoid jail time, including wearing a wire to implicate his co-conspirators. Stan shows human feelings occasionally as the investigation unfolds, but these softer touches are undercut by his ruthless exploitation of every advantage he can get. He wraps himself in the flag of justice, leading his platoon of undercover FBI agents with inspirational speeches about cleaning up Kindle County, but, as someone remarks, Sennett could both "scrape bottom" as well as "reach the stars." Justice is inextricably bound up with Sennett's ego and ambition, with his being short in stature and with his rise out of modest circumstances on the strength of his own efforts.

While Stan is unbending in pursuit of supposedly abstract justice, George Mason and Robbie are just the opposite, flexible reeds who see frailty as the human condition and compromise as the solution to every impasse. As George, who is technically the narrator of the novel, explains, defense attorneys live in a murky world of concession, always dealing for reduced penalties and searching for excuses and rationalizations as exculpatory arguments. George notes, "We are all servants of selfish appetites," repeating "all of us" several times.

Robbie's role as a personal injury lawyer casts him as the champion of the weak and injured against the goliath insurance companies; there is no justice in his eyes, only payment for pain and injury ("It's really chaos and darkness out there, and when we pretend it's not, it's just The Play [a manipulation],"). Evon Miller, a former Olympic-level field-hockey athlete turned FBI weapons specialist and undercover agent, was raised in a conservative Mormon setting and retains a rigid, unforgiving moral code, a system of ethics in accord with the FBI's own strict outlook. Evon, however, is increasingly affected

by Robbie's open humanity, and though still condemning of his sleazy behavior and inability to adhere to the truth, sees in Robbie's legitimate love for family, friends, and even clients a value system worth emulating, something she does herself at the end of the book. Evon, more than purported narrator George Mason, acts as the reader's "agent," the character whose point of view guides reader responses, and her disdain for Sennett and loyalty to Robbie by the end of the book shapes our conception of who wins the battle between justice and mercy.

Evon too leads us to an understanding of the odd relationship between Robbie and Rainey. He is an unfaithful husband, an unrepentant womanizer who sees every skirt as a challenge, yet he refuses to abandon his stricken and helpless wife, whom he loves with a deep and undiluted passion, her condition notwithstanding. Even's first encounters with Robbie evoke a conventional feminist critique from her, but as she learns more of Robbie's depths and meets Rainey, her reactions become more complex. Robbie, of course, sees Evon as a prospective conquest, but his own openness and frankness encourage her to fully admit her lesbian sexual orientation for the first time. She and Robbie develop a complex friendship, incorporating her disapproval of his lies and corner-cutting, yet allowing legitimate respect for his unlikely strengths of character. For example, he is utterly devoted to his partner and childhood friend Morty Dinnerstein, to a blind cousin, and to any number of other people he has encountered in his practice. He is courageous, adopting the role of confidential informant without regard for his physical safety.

The sophistication of defense attorneys has been countered by the development of a wide array of prosecutorial weaponry, some of it high tech, such as the FoxBIte, a digital recording device half the size of a pack of cigarettes, some of it simply disciplined ways of tracing the movement of bribe money from hand to hand. Personal Injuries dramatizes the enormous labor involved in establishing a legally reliable evidentiary chain, given the need to ask at each step in the planning process how a defense attorney will challenge its completeness. For example, random conversations picked up by a recording device in a nightclub will lead the defense to argue that the defendant was not even present at the recording site, only a casual passerby himself. The justice system occasionally goes overboard, as we have seen in Stan Sennett, and one reason is the frustration of establishing what all know to be true in ways that will survive aggressive defenses and skeptical juries. Though the prosecution is not always sympathetic in this novel, their difficulty in finding bulletproof evidence should evoke respect in readers untrained in the law.

In fact, it is just this difficulty with legal proof that fuels much of the competitiveness in the novel, with Sennett regarding chief judge Brendan Tuohey as a kind of uncatchable Moby Dick to be harpooned at all cost, with Robbie courting disaster by bribing judges to gain an edge, with Brendan and his minions arrogantly baiting Robbie when he comes under suspicion. The theme of ambition involves the compromises and even corruptions bright people are willing to entertain. Even Evon, who was competitive as an athlete but somewhat resigned to her life as an FBI agent in Des Moines, jumps at the chance to live undercover for a year to get her competitive juices flowing again. No character survives unscathed by ambition, either their own or that of the people around

them; Robbie and Stan Sennett are worthy antagonists since each sees the means as far less important than the ends.

Adaptations

Personal Injuries was released in an abridged edition, read by Joe Mantegna, on audiocassette and on audio CD, published by Random House (Audio), 1999. Ken Howard narrated an unabridged edition of the novel on audiocassette released by Random House (Audio), 1999.

Key Questions

All of Scott Turow's novels take what initially might be seen as black-white differences to show shades of gray. Though the law must come to clear-cut decisions, when examined closely the human issues involved are revealed to be far more complex and problematic than formal legal judgments allow. Turow's characters, in particular, are shown to be multi-dimensional mixes of good and evil, rendering final evaluation difficult but often persuasively like the decisions made in real life.

1. Lawyers often have a negative reputation in the United States; even Robbie Feaver tells lawyer jokes on himself.

Did the novel change your perspective about the difficulties lawyers face in their daily work? Especially personal injury attorneys? Did the novel create sympathy for practitioners of this kind of work?

2. The title of the novel clearly plays on the personal-injury specialty to suggest that the story is about emotional and other "personal" injuries inflicted by the characters on each other. Make a list of such non-legal injuries, explaining the nature of the harm in a couple of sentences for each character: who injured whom? how? why?

3. It is a truism in legal circles that the roles of prosecutor and defense attorney create very different personality types, contrasting views of human nature and of justice, and disparate ways of operating. How do Stan Sennett and George Mason sum up these differences? Characterize each according to their personalities, viewpoints, and ways of behavior.

4. George Mason is widely regarded as an honorable man, yet he acknowledges some deficiencies of character. What are these faults? For all his faults, does Robbie have virtues George might emulate? What would these virtues be?

5. At times, Robbie Feaver seems like a stereotype of a male chauvinist; this is how Evon Miller sees him initially. Yet women, including Evon and Rainey, continually forgive Robbie, in part because he seems to genuinely like women. Decide whether Robbie is a true chauvinist, and, if he has mitigating virtues, explain what they consist of 6. Part of Robbie's fascination with Evon is how different she is from him in her outlook and behavior. Characterize this difference. Does each character change as a result of contact with the other?

7. Late in the novel, George Mason muses over the principle familiar to military people, that opposing forces come to duplicate each other's methods and approaches. While never mirror images of each other, do Stan Sennett and Brendan Tuohey come to resemble each other in their strategies and behavior?

In what ways?

8. In his final note, Turow worries that his descriptions of Rainey's condition might be construed as disrespectful of real ALS patients. Clearly, incorporating symptoms and sufferings researched from ALS victims into a popular novel to create a literary effect might raise the possibility of exploitation of human suffering. Does Turow manage his depiction of Rainey well enough to escape this charge? Does the novel provide any benefit to advocates for ALS programs?

9. Evaluate how Turow resolves the plot: Does it seem overly dramatic for a book that provides highly realistic views of investigatory procedures? Compare the fates of Robbie and Tuohey to evaluate how "real-life" the ending is.

10. It is sometimes said that fiction is like a dragon, a melding of parts of real creatures into a new, imaginary being. What Midwestern cities and areas provide elements found in Kindle County? Why didn't Turow simply set his fiction in his home town of Chicago, or some other city?

Literary Precedents

Personal Injuries is a legal procedural thriller, a type of novel that often turns on a point of law and is dominated by the business of the law as carried out by lawyers exploring and developing their cases and presenting them in court. The earliest English novel to depict the ins and outs of legal procedures is Charles Dickens's Bleak House (1852-53), while his The Mystery of Edwin Drood (1870) and Wilkie Collins's The Moonstone (1868) make lawyers essential to their narratives.

In fact, the family solicitor has been as staple of fiction from the novel's earliest days and is featured in the detective fiction of Dorothy L. Sayers, Ngaio Marsh, Sara Woods, and Michael Gilbert. Anthony Gilbert's Arthur Crook and Josephine Tey's Robert Blair are lawyers whose crusades seek justice beyond community and law.

Inquests, hearings, court scenes, witness tampering, jurors with insider knowledge, corrupt judges, and challenges to court pronouncements are all staples of the genre.

Eden Phillpotts's The]ury (1927) and Dorothy Sayers's Strong Poison (1930) established a tradition of examining jury deliberations, while Agatha Christie's Witness for the Prosecution (1948) demonstrated the power of a lying witness. Cyril Hare's novels feature the closed-setting courtroom milieu, with Tenant for Death (1937) set mainly at inquests and Tragedy at Laiv (1942) exploring the life and death of a circuit judge and the legal rituals surrounding the case, particularly the combative courtroom relationship between defense and prosecution.

Sara Woods's Anthony Maitland applies both cerebral and intuitive perceptions to his analysis of criminal cases, while John Mortimer's talented Horace Rumpole of the Bailey defends with wit the petty criminals his colleagues eschew.

Erie Stanley Gardner's Perry Mason, who was first introduced in The Case of the Velvet Claws (1933) and appeared in nearly eighty novels—the last of which was The Case of the Postponed Murder (1973)—established the defense lawyer as hero and the courtroom as his stage. There relationships are revealed, motives exposed, and confessions made. This combination of lawyer engaged in complex detective puzzles with courtroom drama hinging on discoveries made by the defense sleuthing team provided a twist that has paved the way for more recent legal procedurals. Gardner explored such conventions as the zealous defense attorney, the ambitious and relentless prosecutor, the courtroom confrontation, the adroit cross-examination, and the last-minute confession or revelation. Classical American trial novels in the Gardner tradition include C. W. Grafton's The Rat Began to Gnaw the Rope (1943), Ellery Queen's The Glass Village (1954), Robert Traver's Anatomy of a Murder (1958), Al Dewlen's Twilight of Honor (1961), William Harrington's Which the Justice, Which the Thief (1963), and Robert L. Fish's A Handy Death (1973).

Related Titles

Scott Turow's Presumed Innocent (1987) created an interest in legal procedurals written by lawyers and law professors like William Bernhardt, Steve Martini, and John Grisham.

Harvey Jacobs's The Juror (1980), Parnell Hall's Juror (1990), Vincent S. Green's The Price of Victory (1992), and Steve Martini's Compelling Evidence (1992) and Prime Witness (1993)—both featuring attorney Paul Madriani—all focus on the jury-duty experience and the importance of jury selection.

John Grisham's novels clarify legal procedure, with A Time to Kill (1989) turning on pre-trial research, jury selection, and final deliberations, and The Firm (1992), The Pelican Brief (1993), The Client (1994), The Chamber (1995), and The Street Lawyer (1998) taking the legal novel in diverse directions.

Philip Friedman's Michael Ryan leads the defense in a sensational murder trial in Reasonable Doubt (1990) and his tough New York City prosecutor, Joe Estrada, sweats a conviction in Inadmissible Evidence (1992), while Lisa Scottoline's Everywhere That Mary Went (1993) follows lawyer Mary DeNunzio's legal work-day. Richard Parrish's The Dividing Line (1993) features series-detective Joshua Robb, a Bureau of Indian Affairs lawyer on the Papago Reservation in the period immediately following World War II, while William Bernhardt's Primary Justice (1992) introduces series-detective and corporate-lawyer Ben Kincaid, who continues to face touchy questions of legal morality in titles like Blind Justice (1992), Deadly Justice (1993), Perfect Justice (1995), Naked Justice (1996), Cruel Justice (1997), Extreme Justice (1998), and Dark Justice (1999), among others.

Robbie Feaver, the central character in Personal Injuries, buys a real law novel, Mitigating Circumstances (1993), for his wife since she enjoys "law guys" stories. The author, Nancy Taylor Rosenberg, also appears in Personal Injuries as the name of the imaginary child Robbie and his wife dream up.

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