



First Degree

David Rosenfelt

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No one can separate defense attorney Andy Carpenter from his golden retriever, Tara, and she returns his affection, standing loyally beside him through every investigation, no matter how dangerous or puzzling-and he is about to be confronted with one of his most difficult cases yet.

When a cop's body is found burned and decapitated, the last thing Andy expects is for a stranger to waltz into his office and admit to the crime. For the wisecracking millionaire attorney suffering from "lawyer's block," the case looks like a no-brainer, until the cops pick up another suspect: Andy's lead P.I., Laurie Collins, who happens to be the love of his life. Soon Laurie's case is looking bleak and Andy is becoming increasingly desperate. All he had wanted was a case to sink his teeth into. Now he gets one that's a kick in the head . . . and the heart.

First Degree Details

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From Reader Review First Degree for online ebook

Francisco says

Another big case ends in a conspiracy. This time the blame falls on Laurie, Carpenter's girlfriend. Carpenter follows the clues until it leads to the mastermind behind the plot to blame Laurie for the murder of ex-detective Alex Demsey. How to prove that Alex and his lieutenant are to blame?

Linda says

I listened to the audio version, which is my preferred way of reading nowadays. I give both the story and the reader an A. I'm a sucker for a good murder mystery. Throw in an attorney with a self-deprecating sense of humor who loves dogs and I'm in near reading heaven.

Maureen DeLuca says

This is the 2nd in the Andy Carpenter series and I absolutely love it. With the 22 million left to Andy by his father Andy can choose which cases he wants to take. He is witty as hell and one of his 'loves' is his dog, Tara- and his other love is P.I. Laurie Collins. And now Andy must save Laurie, when she's framed for the murder of a cop.

To really appreciate this book- I really think you should start with the first in this series "open and shut" which was another great read.

These are quick reads, light and fast and truly enjoyable. Every once in a while, I enjoy a read like this , and I'm pretty sure you won't be disappointed. I'll now go back to my real psycho , serial killers that give me nightmares and after a few of those- I turn to this kind of book - enjoyable and yes, a few laughs here and there along the way!

Gotta love Andy Carpenter , his dog Tara, his girlfriend Laurie- and his funny secretary Edna!

Jim says

[One was found at the scene with gas mixed with propane in it. Propane? That's a gas as far as I know. Never heard of anyon

Judy says

I enjoyed the first book in this series so much that I wanted to listen to the second one. Again I warmed to protagonist, Andy Carpenter and the way he uses wit and humor in the courtroom. It not often that a mystery

makes me laugh, but I did laugh out loud several times. And the plot has elements of suspense that makes me not want to stop listening.

Jaline says

This is the second book in the legal thriller series by David Rosenfelt, and it's a good one! Andy Carpenter and his investigator Laurie Collins, who is also the love of his life, have a challenge ahead – they need to find out why his client is accused of a grisly murder when Andy knows he didn't do it. Then, things become worse when Laurie is indicted for the same murder.

Edna, Andy's secretary, is galvanized. Normally her work involves doing a lot of crossword puzzles – but this is Laurie. Kevin, the wizard lawyer who gave it all up to run a laundromat, drops everything to help out – because this is Laurie. They hire another investigator, intimidating Marcus, who knows both Kevin and Laurie, and he keeps digging for information – for Laurie.

Willie, the young fellow that Andy rescued from death row in the first book, is also back, and of course, Andy's Golden Retriever, Tara, is doing what dogs do best: giving lots of love. Andy still has his 22 million and Edna's Uncle Fred is taking care of that while the case muddles along, frustrating and empty of facts or anything concrete they can use to exonerate Laurie. Time is not moving slow, they are propelled rapidly toward the court date, people are being killed, and the FBI is involved so information on the background of the murder victim is difficult to extract.

This book is fast-paced, liberally sprinkled with Andy's wit and funny sarcasm, and enough tension and suspense to hold up a bridge. I enjoyed this read and recommend it to anyone who enjoys a good legal thriller that is entertaining and eye-popping on its race toward the jury's verdict.

Ellen says

First Degree by David Rosenfelt.

Andy Carpenter, Paterson, New Jersey, attorney is just beginning to accept his notoriety from winning his last case when the decapitated remains of a member of the Paterson Police Dept is discovered. The body is burnt beyond recognition so DNA is required for an accurate identification. The victim is Alex Dorsey. Geoffrey Stynes pays Andy a visit at his office. Stynes requests Andy as his attorney and they sign the standard retainer agreement which establishes client-attorney privileges. During the next few minutes Stynes proceeds to confess to the Alex Dorsey murder and tells Andy where to find the murder weapon. The next move Andy makes is one that will take Andy and his significant other, Laurie Collins, on the ride of their lives with Laurie being charged with the murder of Alex Dorsey.

David Rosenfelt continues to do more than just bring the reader into another court case. He brings us through the stress as we encounter one frame up after another. The camaraderie between Andy and Kevin continues and adds to the suspense. Excellent addition to the andy Carpenter series.

Kevin says

Andy Carpenter's law office has a visit from a prospective client who admits through many details that he killed a police officer that is missing. Andy passes on the case and can't report on what was said because of client confidentiality. He then offers his services to the man accused.

More Sue Grafton than John Grisham, this courtroom shines. A high level of fantastically sarcastic one-liners make this series worth reading!

Kareemah says

Not bad. I want more dog in the story :)

Mary Ronan Drew says

David Rosenfelt has again written a book that combines Paterson, New Jersey, a golden retriever, and a murder mystery and again that is a fine combination. The first book in the series, featuring defense attorney Andy Carpenter was Open and Shut. If you have not read that book, don't read any further in this review as it will reveal some things from that first story.

Ok, in the first book Andy successfully defended a man on death row in a new trial and he is now representing him in a civil suit against the people who actually did the murder he was sent to jail for. Andy has inherited 20 million dollars from his father, money he had no idea he father even had. But as First Degree opens the civil suit is the entirety of his practice. He doesn't want to defend anyone who is guilty and so he turns away most of the people who want to hire him. He does have an office and a secretary who has nothing to do, which is just as well, because she is addicted to NY Times crossword puzzles and wouldn't have time to type or answer phones.

He also has a girl friend, Laurie Collins, a private investigator, formerly a Paterson cop, and his life is settling down nicely. He spends most of his time with his dog, Tara, a golden retriever he rescued from the pound. Then his and Laurie's world is turned upside down when Alex Dempsey, a former Paterson cop, a dirty cop who was responsible for Laurie's resigning her job, is found dead. Well, most of him is found. His torso is headless.

The next morning a man shows up in Dave's office and asks him to represent him. Edna puts aside her puzzle long enough to fill in the standard retainer form and the man signs. Now he can tell Andy anything but Andy cannot tell anyone else what the man has said. What the guy says is that he killed the cop and he provides convincing evidence.

Andy refuses to defend him and when the police arrest a small-time drug dealer for the crime he goes to the public defender's office and volunteer's to represent the man. He knows the guy is not guilty and feels a responsibility to help him. But it isn't long before the case evolves and it becomes clear that man didn't kill Dempsey. And the police turn their attention to Laurie. It becomes increasingly clear that she is being framed. But by whom, and who actually did the murder?

Andy again call on his sometime assistant, a lawyer who for complicated reasons has no formal practice but runs a laundromat and hands out free legal advice while his clients' clothes are tumbling. Along with a computer-savvy accountant and some pals inside the police department Andy and Lauri begin putting together a defense. Everything he will present in court is true, but will the jury believe him?

A clever and complicated plot with a golden dog weaving in and out and a lot of hilariously sardonic quips. A fine combination.

Nancy says

As Jane Austen said: "If a book is well written, I always find it too short."

The Andy Carpenter Mysteries are addictive.

David Rosenfelt combines twists and turns in the plot
with humorous quirks of secretary Edna and legal assistant Kevin!

Tara, Carpenter's golden retriever,
always sits with Andy while he awaits the jury's verdict.
Love this series!

Lynn says

Full review @ Smoke & Mirrors: <http://books-n-music.blogspot.com/201....> Another amazing installment! I love Rosenfelt's writing and he always has me enthralled right up until the end!!

David says

Once upon a time I read a mystery that I solved halfway through the book simply because of a minor aside that caused me to think of the cover of the book. The cover of the book gave that mystery away-- I never finished it.. but looked to the back and found I was 100% correct. I was extremely annoyed.

The cover of this book was really cool-- and had the opposite effect of the above anecdote. The cover of the book had absolutely NOTHING to do with the mystery inside. While that is not exceptionally problematic, it did seem odd that this really cool book cover had nothing to do with the story.

Meanwhile, I'll bet you want to know more about what was in the book. It is an odd book with an odd mystery. Attorney Andy Carpenter interviews a prospective client who confesses to the gruesome murder of a corrupt cop. Carpenter declines to take the case but soon has another client accused of the same crime-- he knows his new client is innocent. To share any more would unravel what really could have been a great mystery for potential readers. I say could have been because though there are some unique moments, some startling revelations, and some clever detective work, but the investigators have very few moments of brilliance or breakthrough detective work. Instead, we are treated to one of those stories with a mysterious group killing and creating fear. We never see the real depth of the conspiracy-- just that it is criminal activity and involves corrupt law enforcement.

While that's fairly negative.. I thoroughly enjoyed the humor, the wit, the sarcasm of the protagonist. There are times when he has a comically twisted thought that he doesn't put to words, but the reader is treated to his thought process. Then, I really got tickled when he squared off with the prosecutor over the winner of the unjust prosecution lottery, etc.

So what we have here is a mystery that barely rises over mediocrity filled with some marvelous humor and some interesting characters. I enjoyed the book, but it wasn't great.

Dee says

Two-haiku review:

Andy's girlfriend framed
Accused of murdering cop
Andy must defend

Another good one
Liking this series a lot
Humor, mystery

Amanda McGill says

So, so happy that there are (as of today) 17 books in the Andy Carpenter series. I can't wait to read the rest of the series!

Andy Carpenter has lawyer's block. He doesn't need the money so he is very selective when it comes to which cases he chooses to take on. After his last big case (Book #1 - Open and Shut) he hasn't found the right case to take on. Enter the mystery man who has just confessed to killing a police officer. This leads Andy on taking on multiple suspects accused of the murder, including his own girlfriend, Laurie Collins.

I enjoyed the book more than the 3 stars would lead you to believe. I loved Andy as a main character and I found myself laughing out loud during the book. The reason that this book didn't get 4 stars is that I didn't enjoy it as much as the first novel. I didn't find that that conclusion was that great. I was hoping for a shocker and didn't get it.

For those that love a courtroom drama and an entertaining funny leading man, pick up this series!

*Read the series in order! Don't read this book unless you have read Open and Shut. There are spoilers in this novel!
