



The Burning Man

By Phillip Margolin

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Chad Wheeler, an arrogant, self-centered associate in a large Portland, Oregon law firm, disobeys the orders of his father--a senior partner in the same firm--and commits a terrible blunder in a multi-million dollar law suit. Fired from his big city job, and disinherited from his father's will, he is sent in disgrace to work as a public defender in a small Oregon town, where he represents a retarded man who is facing the death penalty for the brutal murder of a college co-ed.

With the same fast-paced plotting that drove his last two novels onto the bestseller lists, and full of twists and surprises, this is a complex legal thriller that is sure to be Margolin's biggest bestseller yet.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

A hotshot young lawyer who has disgraced himself ends up defending a retarded man accused of murder.

From the best-selling author of *Gone, but Not Forgotten*

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From [Booklist](#)

Margolin may well be the Danielle Steel of mysteries. His books have the same trite but oh-so-true characters, familiar but nonetheless gripping plots, consummately bad villains, and perfectly flawed heroes. Young attorney Peter Hale, spoiled, conceited, and with a perpetual chip on his shoulder, wants to prove he's as good a lawyer as his father. So when Dad suffers a heart attack, Peter takes on one of the old man's toughest cases and ends up costing a paralyzed woman her million-dollar settlement. Furious, the senior Hale writes Peter out of his will and exiles him to a small town to work as a public defender. Peter doesn't know which is worse, not having his cappucino machine or dealing with nasty criminals. So he goes behind his new boss' back (Won't this guy ever learn?) and takes on the defense of a retarded man accused of murder. If Peter loses the case, the accused goes to Death Row, but if he wins, it's a chance to redeem himself in Dad's eyes. Of course, things go wrong from the git-go, and Peter's stupidity nearly ruins everything. But finally, from the depths of his jerky little soul, something worthwhile emerges. With terrific courtroom scenes, great lawyerly dialogue, and a plot that won't quit, Margolin's latest is sure to parallel a Danielle Steel novel in one more way: bankable mass-market appeal. *Emily Melton*

From Kirkus Reviews

An Oregon lawyer exiled from Portland to the sticks grabs at a high-profile murder case as his one and only chance to turn his life around--and that's only the most obvious clich, in this pot of refried beans. ``You possess the intelligence to be a good lawyer, but you're lazy and self-centered," Peter Hale's father harangues him just after Peter's arrogance and incompetence shut a client out of a well-deserved settlement, and just before he banishes him to legal serfdom in backwoods Whitaker. Well-tailored Peter fumes as he watches his old school friend Steve Mancini run rings around him in their separate defenses of Christopher Mammon and Kevin Booth, two lugs charged with serious coke possession. But salvation seems at hand when Steve maneuvers Peter into defending Gary Harmon, who's facing the death penalty for aggravated homicide after a third Whitaker State coed is killed with a hatchet. A gung-ho cop's persuaded sweet, retarded Gary, who'd had a public confrontation with an approachable blond who brushed him off shortly before the murder, that the couple he saw necking in Wishing Well Park was actually the killer and his latest victim--and then insinuated Gary into the frame by appealing to his psychic powers. And when prosecutor Becky O'Shay's case falters, Kevin Booth, who just happens to be doing his time in the same prison as Gary, passes on a duplicate confession Gary allegedly made to him. Just as Gary, under indictment on a capital crime, is worried that his mother will find out about his skin mags, Peter is worried what the case will do to his budding romance with Becky--until the impossible bind that makes Peter realize his real duty is to his client, not his career, and finally points a finger at the guilty party. Despite the hints of grand conspiracy and grand passion, Margolin (*After Dark*, 1995, etc.) leaves too little meat on these bones for any but the staunchest fans of legal intrigue, with hollow surprises that arrive too late to save his puny plot. -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lorena Repass:

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Shirley Jones:

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Robert Olsen:

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