

The Strangler by William Landay



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Author: William Landay

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From the *New York Times* bestselling author of

Defending Jacob Boston, 1963. A city on edge. On street corners, newsboys hawk the shocking headline: KENNEDY IS DEAD. In the city's underworld, a mob war rages. But what terrifies Bostonians most is the mysterious killer who has already claimed a dozen victims, a murderer whose name is indelibly linked to their city: the Boston Strangler. This is the electrifying backdrop of William Landay's magnificent new novel, a story of one Irish-American family, a city under siege, and the long shadow cast by the most infamous killer of his day . . . For the three Daley brothers, sons of a Boston cop, crime is the family business. They are simply on different sides of it. Joe is the eldest, a tough-talking cop whose gambling habits—fast women, slow horses—drag him down into the city's gangland. Michael is the middle son; a Harvard-educated lawyer working for an ambitious attorney general, he finds himself assigned to the embattled Strangler task force. And Ricky, the devil-may-care youngest son, floats above the fray as an expert burglar—until the Strangler strikes too close to home. As Joe's mob debts close in around him . . . and Michael becomes snarled in a murder investigation gone very wrong . . . and Ricky is hunted by both sides of the law, the three brothers—and the women who love them—are forced to take sides. Now each must look deeper into a killer's murderous rage, into their family's own lethal secrets, and into the one death that has changed them forever. As William Landay's complex, compassionate, and terrifying novel builds to a climax, two mysteries will collide—and a shattering truth will be revealed.



Reviews of the **The Strangler** by William Landay

Lost Python

THIS REVIEW IS FOR THE AUDIOBOOK

I started with Landay's newest novel (Defending Jacob), which was a great listen. It wasn't a book that engrossed me right upfront, but by the time I was just past the middle point, I didn't want to stop listening. As impressed as I was with Defending Jacob, I was more so with The Strangler.

Landay has it down. He writes excellent, intriguing, fully fleshed characters. There's real drama here (as opposed to the melodrama you often find in sub-par mystery/crime novels). He's got a great ear for the way people speak (which shows with his character's dialogue). The story is excellent - there's never an instance of characters bending to plot; everything is organic, realistic, natural.

Not only is the writing really good, but so is the narration. Stephen Hoye was perfect for this book. He did such a great job that I actually browsed other books he'd narrated in hopes I'd find something that interested me (I haven't yet, despite the extensive catalog). There's quite a large cast of main characters here, as well as an abundance of minor players, and Hoye was able to lend nuance to each voice so that, almost always, you knew who was speaking even if the context didn't clue you in.

One evening, after driving home from work, I actually sat in my driveway, listening for an extra five minutes to a tense scene. I couldn't not know how that scene wrapped up before I tuned out for the day. And I couldn't wait to get back at it the next day.

I've got several hundred books in my audible library, and there are perhaps only half a dozen or so I've gone back to for a second listen (to name a few: Hearts In Atlantis, A Widow for One Year, Terror's Echo: Novellas from Transgressions, American Gods). Even knowing how this one ends, I'll be going back for a second listen. I even bought a used paperback edition to loan out to friends, that's how much I liked this book.

Both of Landay's other novels are good too, but this one was my favorite. I only wish he published more frequently.

Malaunitly

After reading Landay's Defending Jacob and loving it, I was excited to read another one of his books. I have found that in many crime fiction books that I have read in my career, the plot is a little slower to develop, and the same was the case for The Strangler. Landay does a nice job developing the personalities of the three brothers created in the story, all with different flaws that seem to come back to haunt them later on. Though the plot was a little slower to start, I was hooked by the end and engaged by the twists at the end of the novel when long-pondered secrets were unraveling and figured out by the brothers. By the end, I felt that there was closure both for the characters and myself as a reader. I did like Defending Jacob a lot more, but this is still a novel worth reading by Landay.

POFOD

I struggled to finish this book. I've read Landay's other two books and enjoyed them, especially Defending Jacob. This one really fell short for me. There was not even one character that I liked or cared about. I think all of them were drawn on such a surface level that I don't know how readers could care what happened to any of them. Beyond that, interweaving a fictional tale with historical facts--especially something as notorious as the Boston Strangler--can be dicey, and Landay does not do it successfully. Then adding mob wars and murders and burglaries and crooked cops to the mix, it just becomes a jumble that is hard to follow and even harder to care about.

Levaq

Against the backdrop of the Kennedy assassination and the Boston Strangler murders, William Landay fashions a Irish Catholic family drama. Joe Daley, Sr. has been murdered under suspicious circumstances in the line of duty, and Mommy is shacking up with his old partner. Her three grown sons--Joe, Jr. (a meat-headed philandering cop with a gambling problem), Ricky, (a cat burglar) and Michael (a moody attorney)--are none too happy with this Greek-tragedy-in-the-making.

It's all a bit too much, especially when the mob gets involved and a major character is killed (perhaps by the Strangler).

That the book is readable at all says a lot about Landay's abilities. There are moments of genuine suspense here, and the characters a very clearly drawn. The ending is a corker.

However, it's all a bit overwhelming. There is material here for two novels possibly, but neither of them feels fully realized in *The Strangler*.

Onetarieva

The Strangler is a big and captivating story. Set in Boston in the '60s, the story centers on three Irish brothers and their extended families. Born in the Irish section of Boston into a policeman's family, each brother has chosen a separate path - prosecutor, policeman, and burglar. While very different in every way with the rivalries common to brothers, they are still of one family, each affected by their larger-than-life father who was murdered in the line of duty in an unsolved case. The story tracks a period of their lives where each is tested separately with personal choices and face the consequences of those choices. In the background is the case of the Boston Strangler which plays into the story with fascinating impact.

Landay has a fine sense of Boston: the neighborhoods, the language, and its unique DNA. He builds his characters expertly, revealing their fears and needs and what drives them. From these parts, Landay produces a rich, complex, and enormously satisfying tale.

Zaryagan

This author has great command of the English language and writes so well! BUT...his overuse of the F word was ludicrous. He probably would have shortened this novel by at least 25 pages if he had edited out that highly overused word. This was a real page turner in spots...really held my attention and kept me reading, but it went on and on unnecessarily in other places. I very much liked the first book of his that I read (*Defending Jacob*) but could have skipped this one and probably won't pursue anymore.

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