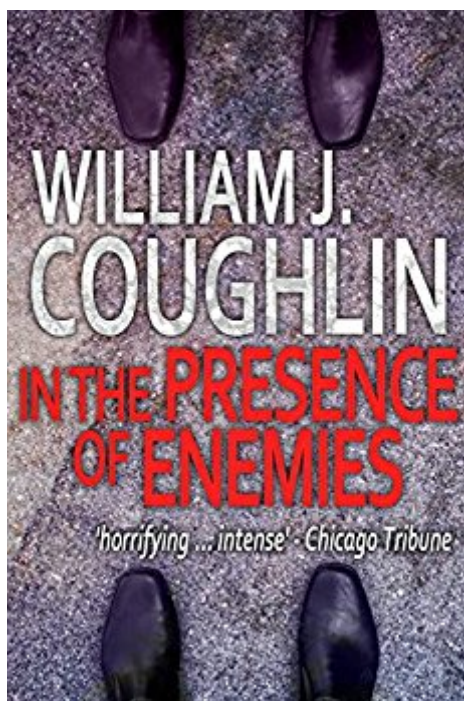


The book was found

In The Presence Of Enemies



Synopsis

In the trial to decide many futures, can Jake survive? It's been five years since hardworking lawyer Jake Martin started at Sperling, Beekman, Howe, Woods, & Simon. A senior associate, he's had his eye on the coveted position of partner for far too long and five years in, it's make or break time. When client Augustus Daren finally passes away after a year on life support, Jake is pulled into a world where the truth is more complicated than it seems. Daren's last will and testament places the control of his bank, Hanover Square, in the hands of his fourth wife, the clever and beautiful Elizabeth Daren, but his two grown children are furious. Gussie and Chip have no need for the money, but they do want the bank and are willing to go to any lengths to get it. Claude Louis deSalle, the devious president of Hanover Square, is similarly shocked by the contents of Daren's will. His ambitions foiled, deSalle works behind the scenes as part of a silent team determined to get rid of Elizabeth Daren. In their eagerness to destroy their stepmother, Gussie and Chip hire Tiger Sage, an experienced trial lawyer to contest the validity of the will. Canny, quick, and more than able to turn a jury in his favour, he shines in a courtroom in a way that Jake can only dream of. And when Jake, a lawyer with zero experience of litigation, is unexpectedly assigned the task of trying the case, he finds himself at the mercy of powerful men and women, buffeted back and forth by currents of power. Ultimately, he realises that when in the presence of enemies, the only person you can truly count on is himself.

Praise for William J. Coughlin

• Good storytelling | jackhammer drive | the climax is gripping. • Detroit News

• Satisfying and right on target | Among Coughlin's best. • Detroit News

• Coughlin keeps you burning the midnight oil to the very end. • Kirkus Reviews

• First-rate entertainment. • Booklist

William J. Coughlin has combined a career as a United States administrative judge with that of a bestselling novelist. A former defence attorney and judge in Detroit for twenty years, he authored sixteen novels, and his experience living and working provided some of the inspiration for his law- and courtroom-themed thrillers.

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Customer Reviews

In the Presence of Enemies departs from traditional legal thrillers by focusing not on a criminal lawyer but on a trusts and estates lawyer. As a general rule, wills and probate are about as boring as the law can get, but William J. Coughlin manages to combine family drama with law firm drama to tell an entertaining tale. Jake Martin is a fifth year associate at a prestigious Detroit law firm. He will either make partner soon or be tossed out to look for new, less lucrative employment. Two other associates are vying for the coveted partnership slot. The partners ask Jake, a trusts and estates lawyer, to join the team that will handle the probate of a rich client who just died. The firm fears that the relatives of Augustus Daren will challenge his will. Perhaps not coincidentally, the other two associates who want to make partner are also on the team. Daren controlled a powerful Detroit bank until he had a stroke. After that, Elizabeth, his wife, called most of the shots. Claude deSalle, the bank's president, also in the control of Daren, isn't sorry to see him go because he wants to merge the bank with a powerful German bank, something Daren would not have allowed. Claude is shocked, however, to learn that Elizabeth has been given the right to vote all of Daren's shares in the bank. That news is also upsetting to Daren's two children by two previous wives. With that setup, the plot follows the Machiavellian moves of bankers and lawyers, and of Daren's widow and children, as they fight for control of the bank. Jake is a bit innocent and naïve compared to nearly everyone else in the book, but he finds himself fighting against a hidden enemy (a circumstance that gives the novel its title). The "hidden enemy" is perhaps too obvious.

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