



# Book of the Month

***The Judge's List* by John Grisham**

**Book Review by Julia Hodges, Friends of the Starkville Library Board Member**

In *The Judge's List*, Grisham has stayed within the world of lawyers and judges, but with a decided twist that distinguishes this book from his other legal thrillers. From the very beginning of the book, you know who the identity of the bad guy: a well-respected judge in the state of Florida. Jeri Crosby, through two decades of conducting a meticulous investigation of her father's murder, has managed to link Judge Bannick not only to her father, but to several other victims whose murders occurred in different states over a period of about twenty years. The commonalities in these different crimes were the connections to Bannick and the method of execution used in each case. The horror of the crimes is exaggerated further by the fact that clearly the judge has been working his way methodically through a list that could very well contain the names of people who are unknowingly in great danger. Jeri decides that she has gone as far with the investigation as she can by herself, so she reaches out to Lacy Stoltz, the head of the Board of Judicial Conduct that investigates complaints against judges in Florida. Fans may remember Lacy from Grisham's earlier book *The Whistler*.

The motivations for Bannick's killing spree range from mistreatment in his early youth to feeling cheated by a fellow lawyer early in his career. The judge has proved not only to be very patient in exacting his revenge on those that he has proclaimed to be guilty, but he has also been clever in hiding his crimes and protecting himself through a myriad of sophisticated computer hacking and tracking systems, a collection of aliases, and his own vast knowledge of the law. This judge may be not only a very prolific serial killer, but also the most brilliant one of all time.

The suspense grows around Jeri's determination to catch Bannick and make him pay for her father's murder and Lacy's attempts to build a case against the judge without endangering other people or



having her own name added to the list. The game of cat and mouse that Jeri and Lacy find themselves playing with Bannick takes a number of twists and turns that take the story in unexpected directions before reaching a complex conclusion. Grisham fans will not be disappointed by this volume that is the latest in his collection of legal thrillers.

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