

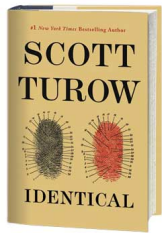
## Scott Turow: On inspiration and the character who stole the show in his new book, IDENTICAL

Written by By TERRY MATHEWS, News-Telegram Arts Editor  
Saturday, 26 October 2013 10:53

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When lawyer-turned-author Scott Turow sat down to write a new book, he had three things on his mind – twins, campaign finance reform and politicians.



“Identical” tells the story of the Giannis twins, Paul and Cass, who grew up in fictional Kindle County, Ill. [a stand-in for Chicago].

Paul, a successful state senator, is considered a frontrunner for governor, while Cass has just been released from prison after serving a 25-year sentence for killing “Dita” Kronon, his girlfriend, after a lavish party at her father’s estate.

Cass confessed to the crime, but, as in any legal thriller, all is not what it seems and the case has always bothered former homicide detective Tim Brodie, now 81, who originally investigated the crime.

The Giannis brothers grew up in the mostly Greek neighborhood Brodie shared with his late wife, Maria.

According to a press release, the story is based loosely on the myth of Castor and Pollus, twin sons of Zeus, who eventually ended up as the constellation Gemini.

“I’ve always wanted to write about identical twins,” the best-selling author of “Presumed Innocent” said. “My younger sister was supposed to be a twin. My dad delivered babies as a profession, so I couldn’t understand how everybody else’s babies were healthy, but my brother died.”

The three-year-old somehow got the idea that the baby who didn’t make it was supposed to be his twin, thus nurturing his “life-long fascination” with identical twins.

Turow, whose book “Presumed Innocent” spent 45 weeks on the best sellers’ list and sold over 6 million copies in paperback, also wanted to shed light on the world of campaign finance.

“I’m very aggravated about it,” he said. “I don’t think novels are necessarily the right place to send a political message, but it got me thinking about those excesses.”

Additionally, Turow wanted to write a book that portrayed a politician in a favorable light.

“Americans don’t seem to think of their political leaders as being good people,” he explained. “I wanted to write a novel about a politician who is a good guy.”

Twins, campaign finance and political good guys were the cauldron from which “Identical” was born.

Although Paul and Cass are the book’s main characters, it’s retired homicide detective Tim Brodie who steals the show.

Dita’s brother, Hal, a successful businessman bent on exacting his revenge on the Giannis

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boys, instructs his chief of security, Evon Miller, to find anything she can to ruin the brothers and takes special aim at Paul's campaign.

Miller hires Brodie to help her uncover the mystery of what really happened that night 25 years ago.

"Tim ran away with the book," Turow stated during a telephone interview from his office. "It was natural, given the way the book was evolving, that Evon would go to the homicide detective who originally investigated the crime. From there, I started writing from his point of view."

Turow soon realized how fond he was of Brodie's character, who had endured the loss of his young daughter and wife.

"I knew who he was," he explained. "I felt a lot of his pain as he was trying to come to grips with the losses that life had inflicted on him."

Although Brodie is gruff and tuff, Turow allows him to retain a positive view of life.

"He always thought there was essentially something affirmative about what he was doing," the author said. "He believes in trying to find the truth. I just love the character. I really do."

In getting to the truth, Brodie digs up the old case files from his basement and with some help from Miller, realizes that law enforcement may have made a mistake in accepting Cass' confession. Advances in DNA testing turn old evidence on its head, opening the door for multiple suspects.

It takes a while for all the plots in this mystery to take shape. As with other Turow books, there are a lot of twists, turns and surprises in the story.

Cass hits the campaign trail as his brother. A seemingly solid marriage cracks under the pressure of the new investigation and political dirty tricks. New suspects emerge.

Turow pays close attention to the story's direction, especially at the beginning of the book.

"That's always part of the early stages of writing a book," he explained. "You keep trying to get it correct."

While most of the plot lines reach a natural conclusion at the end of the book, Turow doesn't rule out a sequel featuring Paul and Cass.

"That's an interesting question," he mused. "It's possible."

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To learn more about Scott Turow, click [here](#) .

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and I'll give you my review copy of "Identical."