



Lines of Defense

By Barry Siegel

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Doug Bard has been a detective with the sheriff's department in La Graciosa, California, long enough to know the score. Now that an influx of upscale chain stores and luxury housing has turned sleepy Chumash County into a boom town, the last thing anyone wants is crime casting a shadow over the prosperity. But Bard also knows he's not the kind of man who can write off a double fatality as a tragic accident—especially when all his instincts tell him it was murder.

When a devastating housefire claims the lives of a kindly local retiree and his eleven-year-old piano student, District Attorney Angela Stark wastes no time declaring the blaze a mishap. But the verdict just doesn't sit right with Bard. Inconclusive but troubling clues—marks on the dead girl's neck, a strange bootprint on a kicked-in door—are enough to make the veteran detective buck the party line and fight to keep the case open. It's a stand that puts the renegade Bard at odds yet again with his superiors. Until a suspect surfaces.

Placed at the scene of the deadly fire by an eyewitness, Jed Jeremiah is a backwoods loner with a homicide conviction in his past. But even as the sensational murder trial gets under way, the same instincts that told Bard there was foul play afoot now convince him that the wrong man may face the death penalty—and a calculating killer is still at large.

Defying the sheriff and the D.A. and putting his job on the line, Bard begins to dig for the truth. What he discovers is a shocking link to his own past—one that will put the people he loves most in deadly jeopardy.

From crime scene to courtroom, *Lines of Defense* unravels a cunningly plotted tale of detection and justice. Michael Connelly has declared, "with Barry Siegel you don't read a story. You feel it. You live it. And you always want more." The third novel by the acclaimed author of *Actual Innocence* and *The Perfect Witness* brilliantly proves him right, on all counts.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Lines of Defense By Barry Siegel Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Siegel is a reporter who has written a couple of legal thrillers (e.g., *Actual Innocence*) and some true crime books. On the evidence of this work, set in a little California coastal town whose charms are rapidly giving way to progress, he is better at plotting there are some devious twists here, as well as some that don't quite ring true than characterization. Doug Bard is a conscientious and dogged detective, separated from his upwardly mobile financial-analyst wife, Sasha, who is not at all happy with the local DA's finding that a fire that killed an elderly eccentric and his young piano student was accidental. When the authorities finally accept that it was murder, they seem to Doug to have hit upon the wrong man as a suspect. Meanwhile the ambitious DA, glamorous Angela Stark, has set her cap for a man of mysterious wealth who's trying to develop the town. Bard is very much on his own as he tries to puzzle out the killer, and meanwhile comfort Sasha and young daughter Molly, who are receiving threats possibly because of him and his investigation? The balls are all kept in the air, and the real villain is a genuine surprise, but Sasha's role is unconvincing, and the characters are wooden; it takes more than fondness for a daughter to create a believable hero, and a love scene in which a man's body "reminded her of a Greek statue" suggests that style is not one of Siegel's strong points.

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From [Booklist](#)

The *Los Angeles Times* reporter follows up his two previous legal thrillers--*The Perfect Witness* (1998) and *Actual Innocence* (1999)--with something of a change of pace. The setting is the same, La Graciosa, California; the writing is excellent, as always; even some of the supporting cast is familiar. But where is Greg Monarch, the attorney-protagonist of the previous novels? Retired, Siegel tells us, and living near Puget Sound. Stepping in as lead character is Douglas Bard, a detective on the local police force, whose suspicions about the supposedly accidental deaths of a schoolteacher and one of his young female students lead him into very deep, dark waters. It's always a little curious when an author dumps a series character, but Siegel very quickly makes us forget Monarch and cheer for the new guy, Doug Bard, a determined and shrewd investigator who only takes "No" for an answer when it suits him. It would be nice to see these two characters team up; until that happens, we look forward to more Bard adventures. *David Pitt*

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From the Inside Flap

Doug Bard has been a detective with the sheriff's department in La Graciosa, California, long enough to know the score. Now that an influx of upscale chain stores and luxury housing has turned sleepy Chumash County into a boom town, the last thing anyone wants is crime casting a shadow over the prosperity. But Bard also knows he's not the kind of man who can write off a double fatality as a tragic accident--especially when all his instincts tell him it was murder.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Cobb:

Inside other case, little folks like to read book Lines of Defense. You can choose the best book if you want reading a book. Given that we know about how is important a new book Lines of Defense. You can add understanding and of course you can around the world by way of a book. Absolutely right, since from book you can recognize everything! From your country until foreign or abroad you will find yourself known. About simple thing until wonderful thing you can know that. In this era, we could open a book as well as searching by internet device. It is called e-book. You can use it when you feel bored stiff to go to the library. Let's study.

Maritza Kress:

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Fanny Rutledge:

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