



## The Overlook

*Michael Connelly*

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## **The Overlook** Michael Connelly

In his first case since he left the LAPD's Open Unsolved Unit for the prestigious Homicide Special squad, Harry Bosch is called out to investigate a murder that may have chilling consequences for national security. A doctor with access to a dangerous radioactive substance is found murdered in the trunk of his car. Retracing his steps, Harry learns that a large quantity of radioactive cesium was stolen shortly before the doctor's death. With the cesium in unknown hands, Harry fears the murder could be part of a terrorist plot to poison a major American city.

Soon, Bosch is in a race against time, not only against the culprits, but also against the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI (in the form of Harry's one-time lover Rachel Walling), who are convinced that this case is too important for the likes of the LAPD. It is Bosch's job to prove all of them wrong.

## **The Overlook Details**

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Author : Michael Connelly

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## From Reader Review The Overlook for online ebook

### Mark says

Michael Connelly does his token terrorism story. And it would not be true to him to make it a political mess and power struggle among the various organisations that want to show the world and their constituency how great they are at the wheel of a real threat. Among them Harry Bosch with a new partner that just wants to solve a the murder that starts of the whole story. And Harry gets mighty annoyed when the murder is considered less important than the threat of some terrorism.

As always Connelly lets his hero do his own thing while the madness around Bosch dictates why he should try to fit in instead of having his own ideas. Bosch is not that much of an idealist but far more a realist that knows his place in the world and tries to hold it with a personal dignity and code of honour. People around him admire him for who he is and at the same time they play the game in order to obtain a play in the pecking order. Bosch is just a darn good investigator so he gets more space to work in time after time, and often when he solves a case he gets the stick due to office politics.

In this book there is one chapter/situation in which Connelly really draws a scary picture of the kind of damage terrorism has done and how the trust and freedom of speech & religion gets trampled because with the current mood in the US officially sanctioned murder gets swept under the rug. It is a really well written chapter in the book and great is my relief to see the main characters being disgusted about what happened.

The book is a great mystery and at the same time a big complaint about politics of fear that rules over common sense. And in this book as always the common sense is Harry Bosch.

Another great one by the Connelly bard of great US thriller/mystery writing.

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### Carol. says

I don't often read from the fiction bestseller list and I periodically wonder what I'm missing. When a Connelly (oops, not John Connolly) book came my way, I was looking for a light headache distraction and thought it might do the trick. To absolutely no one's surprise, I discovered I'm not really missing anything that would cater to my own palate. This is the Arby's of the fast food world: seemingly meaty but rather bland (unlike Nihilist Arby's).

Harry is apparently back in action with LAPD with a new position on a special homicide team. He and his new partner are assigned an execution killing but it quickly becomes complicated when his ex-lover (I think) and FBI agent shows up on the scene on behalf of Homeland Security.

According to the jacket, this was originally a sixteen chapter serial story published in The New York Times Magazine and reformatted for video book-like storytelling. The rewrite wasn't at all obvious, as the story seemed to smoothly flow, lacking the occasional choppiness I associate with serials. Writing was clear but bland lacking details that build richness of character. The most evocative image was that of the overlook and it's view of the L.A. Basin, but I can't tell if that was the book or my own memory. There was a nice little twist near the end, but it was too late to do more than give a momentary pause in my lull.

Overall, it was Storytelling Lite, easily finished in the space of an evening, even with a headache. When I looked up the history of the book, wikipedia noted that some reviewers state it lacked the depth of his other

stories. So I suppose I won't write him off just yet.

Two and a half snoozes.

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## Checkman says

Three and a half stars.

I like the Harry Bosch books. I don't read them all the time. It's been my experience that if I read novels featuring the same character back to back I become bored. It's like watching a long running series on television. It gets comfortable, but predictable.

About once a year I'll read one or two of the Bosch novels. As I wrote in my review of *The Black Echo* I was around when the series began in 92 and I like it.

So last Saturday a local library was having it's annual book sale and I picked up hardback copies of *The Overlook* and *Echo Park* . I started with *The Overlook* first even though I realize it comes after *Echo Park* . Sorry.

Anyway when I picked it up at the sale I was surprised to see how thin it was in comparison to past Bosch novels. Then, when I got into it, I was really surprised to find that Harry had wandered into a season of 24 . Evidently Jack Bauer had called in sick so Harry was filling in for him. Wow.

Guess what. I liked the story. It was different seeing Harry in a "edge of your seat" thriller. It moved along and kept my interest. Yes once I learned that the story had been originally a serial I could see the obvious "cliffhanger moments". So what? Is it such a bad thing to have a long lived and beloved character in something a little different now and again? I actually enjoyed seeing Harry pull it off in his own unique style and it was refreshing. You know sometimes even in the real world cops find themselves in tense, fast moving situations. So why not a fictional character?

It seems that some of the more negative reviews about the book have just a hint of snobbery and purism about them. I believe that Michael Connelly took a chance (albeit a small one admittedly)by shaking things up. At least when it comes to the storyline. Harry isn't really all that different. Maybe a little more brusque than usual, but he's dealing with a very tense situation. I think we get a glimpse of the younger Bosch. The Harry Bosch who served in South Vietnam and went down into the tunnels. In *The Overlook* he has to figure out what happened before things blow up in L.A. It's a near combat situation and he has to ramp it up a bit.

Harry Bosch has been around for a long time. In *The Overlook* he got his action movie (in print) and I think it worked. No Harry should not become the next Last Action Hero, but it was fun seeing him wear those shoes, if only just this once. Relax and enjoy. Don't be so up-tight that all the fun in reading a novel is sucked right out of sight. I recommend this novel.It's a fast exciting read. Enjoy.

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## Alex Cantone says

*Ferras put the Blackberry down and turned back to his computer. Like many detectives he preferred to use*

*his own laptop because the computers provided by the department were old and slow and most of them carried more viruses than a Hollywood Boulevard hooker.*

The novella length **The Overlook** finds seasoned Detective Harry Bosch back in the Robbery/Homicide Division of LAPD, mentoring a young partner, Cuban-American Ignacio Ferras. Bosch is called out towards midnight to an execution-style murder at the Overlook above Mulholland Dam, a short distance from his home. The coroner and Detective Jerry Edgar are on scene but Edgar is happy to hand the case over due to his workload.

Bosch examines the victim's Porsche, left at the lookout with the trunk open, showing strange indentations and he learns the deceased is medical physicist, Stanley Kent, who has access to radio-active isotopes stored at several hospitals in the valley, used in the treatment of cancers. But before Bosch can take charge, he is confronted by FBI Special Agent Rachel Walling of the Tactical Intelligence Unit, an old flame, who is less interested in a homicide than the potential for radioactive caesium to have fallen into the hands of a terrorist group.

At the victim's house the wife is found naked and trussed up on the bed, obviously distraught, the situation not helped by the arrival of Walling's partner, Brenner, and Bosch fights to keep some control over the case...and some elements of the wife's story doesn't sit right with him.

This is classic Hieronymous Bosch standing up to the FBI. But before he can negotiate terms he and Ferras are sidelined to attend the scene where a car allegedly used in the execution (as witnessed by a tourist/drifter) has been found outside the house of an Islamic activist following an anonymous tip-off. Now Bosch has to face Hadley, the gung-ho head of LAPD's Office of Homeland Security, a character that reminded this reader of Colonel Flagg of military intelligence in the long-running TV series M\*A\*S\*H\*.

Verdict: intelligent, well-written and entertaining.

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## **Jonetta says**

Harry Bosch now works in the Robbery-Homicide Division in the Homicide Special unit follow the events of Echo Park. He's got a new partner, Ignacio Ferras, and their first case is the murder of a medical physicist. Because the case also involves the theft of some radioactive materials, the FBI and other alphabet agencies want to control the case that Harry first sees as a homicide.

This is Connelly's most nimbly-written story to date and that made a big difference in my enjoyment. I finished listening to it in a day and it made my road trip just perfect. FBI Agent Rachel Walling makes a return and is a major factor in the story. The pace was wonderful as everything moved so quickly. Even though I figured out the villain early on, there were still some surprises at the end.

Lou Cariou continues to work for me as the narrator of these stories. I liked this one and the ending left some unanswered questions that I'm looking forward to having resolved in the next book. This was a good one, especially on audio.

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## **Brent says**

The Overlook is Connelly's latest Harry Bosch detective novel. The book was written as a 16 part serial

novel for the New York Times Magazine and it shows. I'm a big Bosch fan and I always enjoy reading about him but I am a little disappointed in this book. As one might expect with a serial novel, many chapters are disjointed and Connelly does not focus on character development. Rachel Walling is again back in Bosch's life and while Connelly mentions the relationship, he doesn't do much to develop the relationship and/or play off the tension created when the two are again pitted on opposite bureaucratic sides (Feds vs. LA) in the current investigation.

The book is largely plot driven but again, this is a short novel and it isn't overly complicated. (I hate to say it but this has "movie script" written all over it.) The plot does have some interesting twists and plays off the obvious struggles that law agencies face in the increasingly national security/terrorism challenges that continue to confront our nation.

All in all-- this is a fun, quick read-- perfect fodder for the beach. Hardcore Connelly fans will enjoy another Bosch novel but don't expect the rich character development and plots that we've come to expect from him. My recommendation: its definitely not worth buying the hardback. Wait for the softback or, better yet, pick it up at the library.

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### **Book Addict Shaun says**

The Overlook is a much shorter Harry Bosch novel than the others I have read, in fact it felt a bit like a novella and it missed some of the characterisation we are used to from Michael Connelly. That said, it was all story and happened in real time so it had a bit of a different feel to the stories that take place across a week or so.

Harry Bosch is a fantastic character and for those who are yet to meet him, this wouldn't be a terrible place to start. In The Overlook we see him battling for control of a case with the FBI. And, none other than his on off lover Rachel Walling. There's some great scenes in this book. We as readers love Bosch, but to anyone else who he doesn't like or who doesn't like him, he's an absolute bastard and that only makes me like him even more.

Despite the shortness of the story I did enjoy the plot and where it eventually ended up. It could perhaps be said that once again Bosch ties everything up too neatly, and that once again career ending mistakes end up being washed away however this is fiction and I read these books to see Bosch behaving like this and to see him come out on top and so I am not going to complain. I am just going to say long may it continue.

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### **Gary says**

The 13th book in the Harry Bosch series.

Another great page turner that keeps you gripped to the very end.

This book was slightly different to the usual Michael Connelly recipe but this fast paced action packed novel certainly hits the spot. A little shorter than usual but nevertheless outstanding. Bring on number 14.

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### **Mike says**

Bosch is at his irascible best, hunting for murders of a nuclear scientist. Add in Homeland Security, the FBI, including former love interest Rachel, and possibly evil Arab terrorists, and it's a fun ride.

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### **James Thane says**

I first read this story when it was serialized in the *New York Times Magazine*. Following that, Connelly expanded the story and published it as a novel. I remember enjoying the serialized version, but, as one would expect, the novel winds up being a fuller and richer experience.

As the story opens, Detective Harry Bosch has just been reassigned to the L.A.P.D.'s prestigious Homicide Special Squad. He's sitting up at midnight, waiting for his first call out. When it comes, he's directed to a homicide on an overlook above the city. He arrives to find that a doctor, Stanley Kent, has been murdered execution-style, next to his Porsche, which is has been left with its luggage compartment standing open.

As Harry examines the scene, he is surprised by the arrival of F.B.I. agent Rachel Walling. Walling indicates that the victim, Kent, was a medical physicist who was on a list kept by the federal government. She initially refuses to tell Bosch why Kent was on the list or why she is interested in the case, and insists that they should get to Kent's house A.S.A.P.

Bosch concurs and, on arriving at the house, they discover the victim's wife, naked and tied up on a bed. She tells them that two men invaded the house, forced her to strip, then tied her up and took pictures of her. It appears that terrorists may have used the pictures to force Stanley Kent to give them extremely dangerous radioactive material.

The Feds, of course, want to take over the case and are, logically, pursuing it as part of a dangerous terrorist plot. The material in question could cause thousands of deaths and that is their priority. While Bosch recognizes the threat, from his perspective this is principally a homicide investigation and he insists on being allowed to pursue it. His rational is, find the killers and you find the material they stole.

It's a gripping story that moves very swiftly. Connelly excels at portraying the bureaucratic infighting between the Feds and the local police and it's really fun to watch. The fact that Bosch and Rachel Walling were once lovers only adds fuel to the mix. Bosch, being Bosch, is not about to take a back seat to anyone, especially not the F.B.I. This story first appeared only a few years after the attacks of 9/11, when the threat posed by potential terrorists was even more frightening. Twelve years later, the threat still feels palpable, especially in the hands of a writer as skillful as Michael Connelly, and fans of the series will not want to miss this one.

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### **Obsidian says**

Eh. This was not my favorite Bosch. After a couple of home-runs with this series, this was definitely a disappointment. About half the length of his usual books, Connelly uses this to just show readers excerpts from his other books. I hit the finish line with this book at 74 percent I think. The remaining was just excerpts.

This felt and reads more like a short story. We have so many plot holes I don't even know which to begin with in "The Overlook." It's been a year since the events in "Echo Park." Harry is still bitter that Rachel Walling cut him off (I would have too) after his shennigans in the last book. He is still visiting his daughter

in Hong Kong when he has time. He now has a new partner, after Kiz has gone back to working for the Chief of Police. His partner Ignacio (call me Iggy) Ferras is younger than Bosch, and their partnership is not going very smoothly. I wish I could sympathize with Bosch more, but honestly I was tired of his games from beginning to end in this one. And thankfully Bosch finally got it through his thick head he can't just do what he wants with no blow back. Maybe nuclear material entering the picture in this one was what he needed.

Bosch is no longer in Open/Unsolved. Now he is a unit called Homicide Special Squad. Bosch and Iggy (I don't care that Bosch doesn't like the guy's nickname, he was being an ass by refusing to use it) are called to a homicide where a Doctor Stanley Kent is found with some bullets to the head. It looks like a simple case of possible robbery gone wrong until Bosch is informed that Kent has access to radioactive material due to his job and a possible terrorist may have gotten his hands on it. Enter Rachel Walling and her colleagues from the FBI.

I was happy to see Rachel back in Bosch's face and Bosch realizing that many at the FBI think and know what a loose cannon he is. Bosch has hurt feelings about the whole thing and I may have stated mumbling "boy bye" under my breath. I like Bosch. But I am over the martyr act he has going for most of this book. Also since tracking down radioactive substances is more of an issue than him finding out who killed Stanley Kent I felt like his pissing match with the FBI was just ridiculous.

We get some new faces in this one and of course new with Iggy and some others. We see a reappearance of J. Edgar who once again proves that tv J. Edgar is better than book J. Edgar. It always makes me uncomfortable how Connelly portrays him as lazy and homophobic. Ugh.

The writing wasn't on par with previous books. I counted so many plot holes I gave up after 10. I think my biggest issue is that it doesn't make sense when you find out the why behind Kent's murder. It's beyond stupid. Why do something that would bring in the cops and the FBI? I think at that point you want to get caught. That's all I am going to say about that.

The book ends on a weird note. I know Bosch isn't dead (hello other books in the series) but it leaves things on a fraught note with him maybe getting in trouble due to being around some of the radioactive material. We have another partner of his who may be down and out. And at this point, you couldn't pay me to partner with Bosch.

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## Lyn says

Michael Connelly has made a name for himself by creating the characters Harry Bosch and Mickey Haller.

In *The Overlook*, Connelly's 2007 entry into the Harry Bosch files, the mystery writer takes on a case where Bosch must work with the FBI in a suspected terrorist case.

This is the 13th Harry Bosch novel (Connelly began the series with *The Black Echo* in 1992) and the LAPD detective again demonstrates his Holmes-esque attention to detail and also his inability to follow bureaucratic rules. Connelly effectively describes the Vietnam veteran as IT challenged, but to his credit does not allow this stereotypical anachronism to devolve into a running joke and Bosch more than makes up for his old codger ways by his considerable skill as an investigator. In this episode in the series Bosch does some smooth police work.

To be successful in this genre, a writer must possess the ability to maintain a recognizable and likeable

protagonist and drop this player into a mystery and have him work out of it in a cognizant and believable way. One problem I always had with Doyle's classic sleuth is the obscure clues that lead inexorably towards an elementary solution. I called BS on a lot of the hints that Sherlock used, but Doyle got away with it because of the charisma Holmes possessed and the writer's own talent at telling the story.

The Overlook is not one of the better Bosch stories, it is a touch too slick and maybe even formulaic, but Connelly's faculty to weave a good mystery with a captivating hero is nonetheless on full display.

A fun whodunit.

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### **Carol says**

2 stars – It was neither good nor bad. As my younger friends say meh!

The most exciting thing that happened in this Harry Bosch novel was learning a bit about the radioactive material cesium and what could happen if it were used in a terrorist plot. All seemed too familiar, like the same old. A short story that seemed rushed. What saved The Overlook from becoming a DNF was the continued fine performance by Len Cariou in narration.

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### **Robin says**

Harry Bosch is called out on his first case since being recruited to the Homicide Special Squad. The body of Dr. Stanley Kent has been found on the Overlook near Mulholland Drive. He was killed execution style. Harry and his new partner Ignacio Ferras are just starting to put the pieces of the murder together when FBI Agent Rachel Walling shows up. She wants information about the murder, but doesn't want to give up anything in return. As Harry fights to keep jurisdiction over the murder, he discovers this routine investigation has spiraled into an incident that may cost hundreds of lives.

This is a fast paced story and a good installment in the Harry Bosch series. My rating: 4 Stars.

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### **Rob says**

Number 13 in the Bosch series.

This book was short but sweet.

Harry back with the LAPD and a new partner.

Harry and his partner get called to a homicide on the Overlook at Mulholland Drive. Turns out that this is not just a homicide but could also be terrorist related. Because of the terrorist threat the FBI and OHS, OHS stands for Office of Homeland Security. The FBI and OHS take the case and leave Harry and his partner out in the cold. No way is Harry going to let this happen. Harry finds a witness to the murder but hides him from the FBI. The FBI have suspects but won't let Harry interview them. Harry is more than a little bit annoyed at the FBI but conversely the FBI are just as p'ed off at Harry.

If the animosity that exists between the LAPD and the FBI in the book is a reflection of real life it's a miracle that any crimes ever get solved.

It's good to see Harry back where he belongs.

This is a short, easy and entertaining read with enough twists and turns to keep you turning pages.

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