

Defending Jacob

by William Landay

Martin County Library System Book Club Kit:

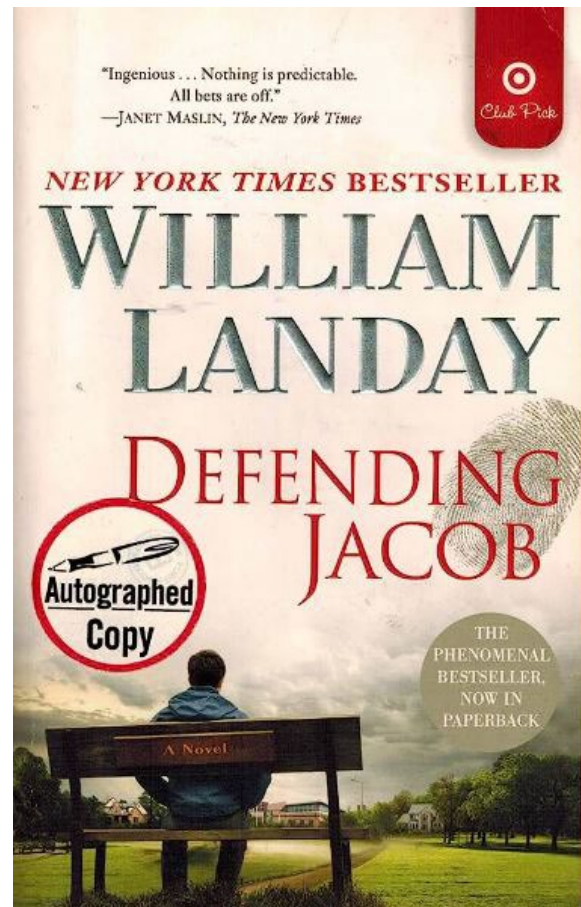
Defending Jacob by William Landay

Included in the Kit:

- [Book summary](#)
- [Author biography](#)
- [Discussion questions](#)
- [Recipe suggestions](#)

Book summary

Andy Barber has been an assistant district attorney for two decades. He is admired in the courtroom. Happy at home with the loves of his life: his wife, Laurie, and teenage son, Jacob. Then Andy's quiet suburb is rocked when a young boy is stabbed to death in a leafy park. And an even greater shock: The accused is Andy's own son—shy, awkward, mysterious Jacob. Andy believes in Jacob's innocence. Any parent would. Any parent should.





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But the pressure mounts. Damning evidence. Doubt. A faltering marriage. Neighbors' contempt. A murder trial that threatens to obliterate Andy's family. It is the ultimate test for a parent: How well do you know your child? And how far would you go to protect them? For Andy Barber, a man with an iron will and a dark secret, the test cuts even deeper: How guilty are you?



also available to
download from Libby

Source: Author's website (williamlanday.com/books/defending-jacob/)

Meet the Author

William Landay is the author of *All That Is Mine I Carry With Me* and three previous novels: *Defending Jacob*, which won the Strand Critics Award for best mystery novel; *The Strangler*, listed as a best crime novel of the year by the *L.A. Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and others; and *Mission Flats*, winner of the Dagger Award for best first crime novel. A former assistant district attorney, he lives in Boston.



Source: Author's website (williamlanday.com/about/)



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Discussion Questions

1. How would you have handled this situation if you were Andy? Would you make the same choices he made? Where would you differ the most?
2. Before and during the trial, how would you have handled the situation if you were Laurie? Do you feel she made strong choices as a mother and a wife?
3. Is Andy a good father? Why or why not?
4. Do you believe Jacob is guilty?
5. Is Jacob a product of his upbringing? Do you think he is he a violent person because his environment makes him violent, or do you think he has violent inclinations since birth?
6. Bullying is such a hot topic in today's media. How did the author incorporate it into the story, and do you think it's role had anything to do with Jacob's disposition? How do you think people should stop adolescent bullying?
7. How much of a factor did Jacob's age play into your sympathies for him or lack thereof? If Jacob were seventeen, would you view him differently? What about nine?
8. Do you think Neal Logiudice acts ethically in this novel? What about Andy? What about Laurie?
9. What was the most damning piece of evidence against Jacob? Was there anything that you felt exonerated him?
10. If Jacob hadn't been accused, how do you think his life would have turned out? What kind of a man do you think he would grow up to be?

Source: BookBrowse

(bookbrowse.com/reading_guides/detail/index.cfm/book_number/2652/defending-jacob)

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Recipes

Boston Creme Pie

- 2 large eggs room temperature
- 1 cup cane sugar 200g
- 1/2 cup whole milk 120mL
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter 70g
- 1 cup all-purpose flour plus 2 tablespoons, 140g
- 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream 60mL
- 4 ounces bittersweet chocolate chopped



Pastry Cream

- 6 egg yolks room temp
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup corn starch
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups whole milk 480mL
- 1 tbsp butter 15g

For the Pastry Cream

Pour the milk into a medium saucepan, heat then place over medium heat and bring to a boil. Immediately turn off the heat and set.

In a large bowl, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until light and thickened. Sift in the cornstarch and whisk vigorously until no lumps remain. Whisk in 1/4 cup of the



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hot milk mixture until incorporated. Whisk in the remaining hot milk mixture, reserving the pot for later.

Pour the mixture through a strainer back into the pot. Cook over medium-high heat, whisking constantly, until thickened and slowly boiling. Cook while whisking for an additional minute or two after thickened and boiling. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter. Let cool slightly then cover with plastic wrap, lightly pressing the plastic against the surface to prevent a skin from forming. Chill in the refrigerator.

For the Cake

Preheat oven to 350F. Spray an 8-inch round cake pan with baking spray or butter and flour it. Line bottom with parchment paper and spray again.

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl, then whisk together and set aside.

In a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment or large mixing bowl if using a hand mixer, add eggs and sugar. Beat on medium speed until pale, thick, and fluffy, about 4 minutes. (Beater should leave a trail in eggs when lifted.)

Meanwhile, in a glass measuring cup, combine milk and butter. Microwave on high in 30 second intervals until butter is melted and milk is steaming.

With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to egg mixture, beating just until combined. Stir vanilla into hot milk mixture. Slowly pour hot milk mixture into egg mixture beating until fully combined. (Batter will look like thick pancake batter and have bubbles on top.) Scrape the sides of the bowl and fold batter a few times to insure it's fully combined. Pour batter into the prepared cake pan.

Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean and cake begins pulling away from sides of pan, about 33 minutes. Let cool in pan for a few minutes then invert onto a wire rack to cool completely.



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For the Assembly

Cut cake in half horizontally. Place bottom half, cut side up on a serving plate. Spread the chilled, thickened pastry cream over cake, leaving a 1 inch border. Top with remaining cake half and gently press down to spread filling to edge. Place in fridge and chill for at least 2 hours or overnight; cover with plastic or a cloche if chilling for more than two hours.

For the Ganache

When ready to serve, place cream in a microwave-safe bowl; microwave cream and optional corn syrup until steaming, about 1 minute. Add chopped chocolate and let stand for 5 minutes. Stir chocolate and cream mixture until smooth. Pour over top of cake, spreading to edges.

Source: Preppy Kitchen (<https://preppykitchen.com/boston-cream-pie/>)

Cranberry Mocktail

- 125 mls Cranberry juice low sugar
- 125 mls Sparkling drink of your choice see notes
- Crushed ice

Fill a glass with crushed ice. If you don't have crushed ice place some whole ice cubes into a zip lock bag or similar and crush. Full the glass approximately halfway with cranberry juice. Slowly top with sparkling beverage of your choice. Garnish and serve immediately.



Source: Mindful Mocktail (<https://mindfulmocktail.com/quick-cranberry-mocktail/>)

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