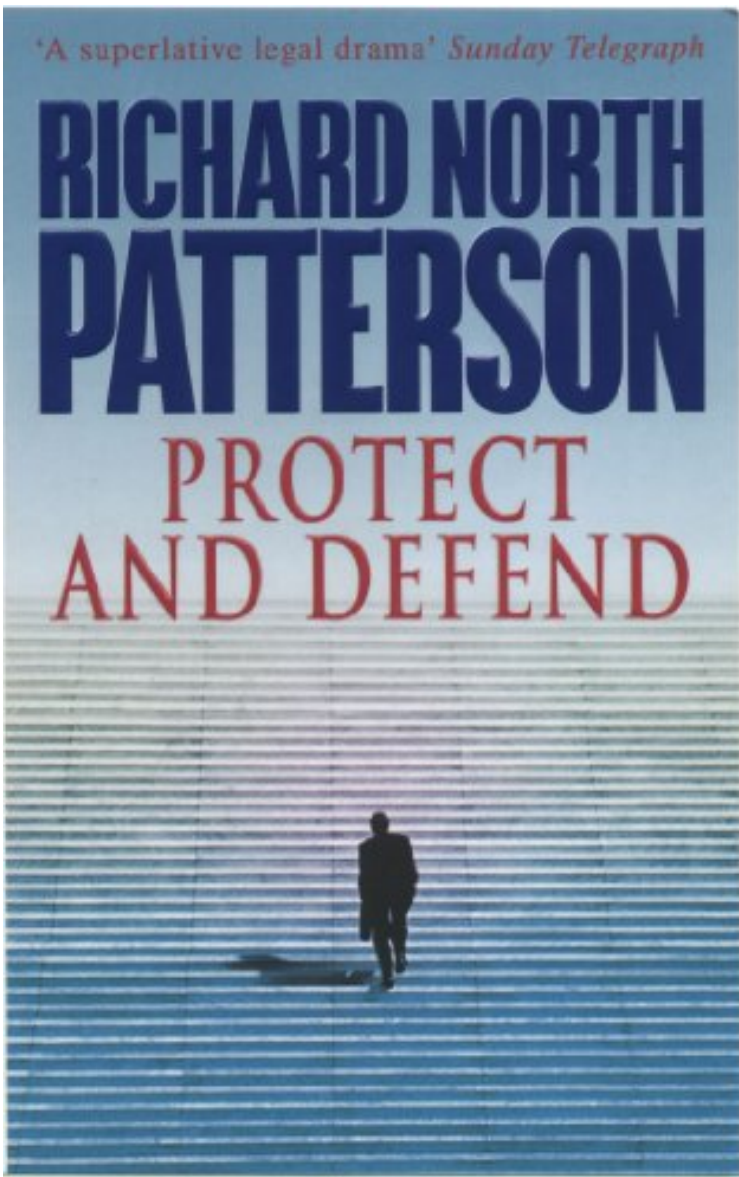


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# Protect And Defend



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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur'She was a girl, really, with short red hair and a waif-like slimness. But despite the flowered dress she wore, her belly had begun to show. Immobile, the girl gazed at the clinic as though it were a thousand miles away.'The young woman is Mary Ann Tierney. She is fifteen years old. Within days her name will be known to millions across America, her court case a television must-watch for everyone from the President downwards. As Mary Ann takes on her own parents and the constitutional law of the United States in a desperate bid to protect her future right to bear children, the ramifications of 'the Tierney case' bring a threat to the new President, Kerry Kilcannon, to his nominee for Chief Justice, Caroline

Masters, and to his main rival for the Presidency, Senator Chad Palmer. All have dangerous secrets in their past, secrets that would not only threaten careers, but bring death and tragedy to innocent lives..comRichard North Patterson, whose legal thrillers have won him legions of devoted mystery fans, shows off his superb pacing and narrative gifts as well as his ability to create vividly realized characters in this compelling novel of late-term abortion, parental consent, and the battle over a nominee for chief justice of the Supreme Court. Unlike Patterson's typical courtroom dramas, the name of this game isn't murder; it's the body politic that's

bleeding. When newly elected Democratic president Kerry Kilcannon nominates appeals court judge Caroline Masters to the top spot on the court, he knows he'll have a fight on his hands. Leading the opposition is his political rival, MacDonald Gage, the GOP majority leader who owes his soul and career to the Christian right wing. They're suspicious of Masters even before a politically charged case involving a teenager whose parents refuse to allow her to terminate a disastrous pregnancy ends up in her court. More principled than Gage, but equally adamant, is Republican senator Chad Palmer, who, like Masters, harbors his own potentially career-destroying secret. Masters is an intriguing character, a woman whose judicial integrity, personal privacy, and political ambitions collide when she casts a tie-breaking vote on the constitutionality of the recently enacted Protection of Life bill. Not only young Mary Anne Tierney's future is at stake: so are the reproductive rights of all women, the resilience of the judicial system, and the personal lives of innocent bystanders who will be sacrificed on the altar of the First Amendment--the public's right to know, and the media's right to tell. Moving swiftly between the courts of public opinion and the federal judiciary, from San Francisco to the nation's capital, Patterson tells a mesmerizing story that's been praised by political and legal luminaries such as Mario Cuomo, Barbara Boxer, and Alan Dershowitz. But don't let that stop you. This up-to-date version of Advise and Consent is a provocative read that will resonate with political junkies as well as those who've made bestsellers out of Patterson's more typical genre thrillers. -- Jane Adams

Extrait "I, Kerry Francis Kilcannon . . ." "In a high clear voice, carrying a trace of Irish lilt, Kerry Kilcannon repeated the historic phrases intoned by Chief Justice Roger Bannon. The two men faced each other on the patio which fronted the west side of the Capitol, surrounded by guests and officeholders and watched from greater distances by thousands of well-wishers who covered the grounds below. The noonday was bright but chill; a heavy snow had fallen overnight, and the mist of Bannon's words hung in the air between them. Though Kerry wore the traditional morning coat, those around him huddled with their collars up and hands shoved in the pockets of much heavier coats. Protected only by his traditional robe, the Chief Justice looked bloodless, an old man who shivered in the cold, heightening the contrast with Kerry Kilcannon. Kerry was forty-two, and his slight frame and thatch of chestnut hair made him seem startlingly young for the office. At his moment of accession, both humbling and exalting, the three people he loved most stood near: his mother, Mary Kilcannon; Clayton Slade, his closest friend and the new Chief of Staff; and his fiancee, Lara Costello, a broadcast journalist who enhanced the aura of youth and vitality which was central to Kerry's appeal. "When Kerry Kilcannon enters a room," a commentator had observed, "he's in Technicolor, and everyone else is in black-and-white." Despite that, Kerry knew with regret, he came to the presidency a divisive figure. His election last November had been bitter and close: only at dawn of the next morning, when the final count in California went narrowly to Kerry, had Americans known who would lead them. Few, Kerry supposed, were more appalled than Chief Justice Roger Bannon. It was an open secret that, at seventy-nine, Bannon had long wished to retire: for eight years under Kerry's Democratic predecessor, the Chief Justice had presided grimly over a sharply divided Court, growing so pale and desiccated that he came, in Kerry's mind, to resemble parchment. Seemingly all that had sustained him was the wish for a Republican president to appoint his successor, helping maintain Bannon's conservative legacy; in a rare moment of incaution, conveyed to the press, Bannon had opined at a dinner party that Kerry was "ruthless, intemperate, and qualified only to ruin the Court." The inaugural's crowning irony was that the Chief Justice was here, obliged by office to effect the transfer of power to another Democrat, this one the embodiment of all Bannon loathed. Whoever imagined that ours was a government of laws and not men, Kerry thought wryly, could not see Bannon's face. Yet he was here to do his job, trembling with cold, and Kerry could not help but feel sympathy and a measure of admiration." . . . do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States . . . "The outgoing president watched from Kerry's left, gray and worn, a cautionary portrait of the burdens awaiting him. Yet there were at least two others nearby who already hoped to take Kerry's place: his old antagonist from the Senate, Republican Majority Leader Macdonald Gage; and Senator Chad Palmer, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, a second Republican whose rivalry with Gage and friendship with Kerry did not disguise his cheerful conviction that he would be a far better president

than either. Kerry wondered which man the Chief Justice was hoping would depose him four years hence, and whether Bannon would live that long." . . . and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."Firmly, as though to override the old man's hesitance, Kerry completed the oath.At that wondrous instant, the summit of two years of striving and resolve, Kerry Francis Kilcannon became President of the United States.A rough celebratory chorus rose from below. Mustering a faint smile, Bannon shook his hand."Congratulations," the Chief Justice murmured and then, after a moment's pause, he added the words "Mr. President."At 12:31, both sobered and elated by the challenge awaiting him, President Kerry Kilcannon concluded his inaugural address.There was a deep momentary quiet and then a rising swell of applause, long and sustained and, to Kerry, reassuring. Turning to those nearest, he looked first toward Lara Costello. Instead, he found himself staring at Chief Justice Bannon.Bannon raised his hand, seeming to reach out to him, a red flush staining his cheeks. One side of his face twitched, and then his eyes rolled back into his head. Knees buckling, the Chief Justice slowly collapsed.Before Kerry could react, three Secret Service agents surrounded the new President, uncertain of what they had seen. The crowd below stilled; from those closer at hand came cries of shock and confusion."He's had a stroke," Kerry said quickly. "I'm fine."After a moment, they released his arms, clearing the small crush of onlookers surrounding the fallen Chief Justice. Senator Chad Palmer had already turned Bannon over and begun mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Kneeling beside them, Kerry watched Palmer's white-blond head press against the Chief Justice's ashen face. Chad's cheeks trembled with the effort to force air down a dead man's throat.Turning at last, Palmer murmured to Kerry, "I think he's gone."As ever in the presence of death, Kerry experienced a frisson of horror and pity. Chad touched his arm. "They'll need to see you, Mr. President. To know that you're all right."Belatedly, Kerry nodded. He stood, turning, and saw his mother and Lara, their stunned expressions mirroring his own. Only then did he register what Chad Palmer, whose former appellation for Kerry was "pal," had called him.At once, Kerry felt the weight of his new responsibilities, both substantive and symbolic. He had asked the country to look to him, and this was no time to falter.Kerry stepped back to the podium, glancing back as paramedics bore the Chief Justice to an ambulance. The crowd below milled in confusion.Gazing out, Kerry paused, restoring his own equanimity. Time seemed to stop for him. It was a trick he had learned before addressing a jury and, even now, it served.Above the confusion, Kerry's voice rang out. "The Chief Justice," he announced, "has collapsed, and is on his way to the hospital."His words carried through the wintry air to the far edge of the crowd. "I ask for a moment of quiet," he continued, "and for your prayers for Chief Justice Bannon."Stillness fell, a respectful silence.But there would be little time, Kerry realized, to reflect on Roger Bannon's passing. The first days of his administration had changed abruptly, and their defining moment was already ordained: his submission to the Senate of a new Chief Justice who, if confirmed, might transform the Court. The ways in which this would change his own life--and that of others here, and elsewhere--was not yet within his contemplation.From the Hardcover edition.