

The Plagiarism Plot

Geoffrey M. Cooper

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The Plagiarism Plot is an engaging series entry that moves at a rapid-fire pace through a complex investigation to clear a professor's name.

In Geoffrey M. Cooper's exciting thriller *The Plagiarism Plot*, a professor investigates his friend's alleged academic misconduct.

When the Office of Research Integrity opens a plagiarism investigation against tenured professor Carolyn, her colleague Brad doesn't believe it. The ORI, ignorant of his friendship with the accused, requests that Brad lead the investigation, and he is determined to prove his friend innocent. As Brad looks into the allegations, he uncovers a complex plot that goes much further than just one professor's career, putting him and those connected to the case in imminent danger.

This engaging novel moves at a rapid-fire pace. The prologue establishes that the plagiarism allegations are shady, resulting in dramatic irony as Brad begins to investigate. And the previous series history is revealed when necessary, so this installment is enjoyable either in connection with those books or as a standalone novel.

Although the stakes are low at first, they heighten as Brad gets closer to learning the truth. He finds clues regarding the academic misconduct that infuse it with import, and each scene feeds seamlessly into the next. Indeed, the book maintains momentum until its action-packed, if abrupt, ending.

The prose is straightforward, focusing on action over details. People and places are described in a sparing manner. Suspense is built through Brad's conversations with others as he observes their characteristics and determines the likelihood that they are involved with the plot against Carolyn.

Brad's strong chemistry with his romantic partner, Karen (a former FBI agent and current police detective who is roped into the case) yields additional interest, in particular because of her fresh perspectives on Brad's findings. He respects her and relies on her sharp eye, leading to stunning realizations about the case. Carolyn's characterization is more reliant on her interactions with Brad and is somewhat limited to Brad's observations of her. This is true of secondary characters as well: After a conversation reveals a suspect's generosity, Brad concludes that they are not a threat. Still, because he is a sharp judge of character (something he ascribes to his relationship with Karen and her teachings), all serve their purposes. Additional intrigue is generated because his insights are not perfect: One egregious miscalculation puts Brad, Karen, and Carolyn in danger.

An academic investigation takes a dark turn in the suspenseful mystery novel *The Plagiarism Plot*.

LEAH BLOCK (January 7, 2025)

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