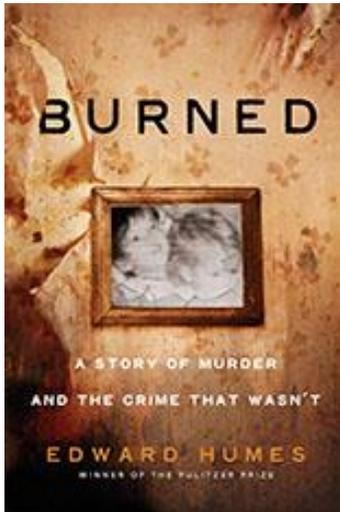


Hella's Book Review



Burned – A Story of Murder and the Crime That Wasn't

This non-fiction book by author Edward Humes details in length the fire that killed three innocent young children and the conviction and imprisonment of their mother.

On April 9th 1989 three young children perished in a fire on Sherman Way in Bell, California near Los Angeles. The two girls, RoAnn and Jessica, were asleep in one room and the four year old boy, Ronnie Jr., was in another room with his door was closed. When their mother, JoAnn Park, awoke she found the house engulfed in heavy smoke and believed she could not save the children, so she escaped to the neighbors. Their father, Ron Parks was at his work and not at home during this time. At first the fire seemed like a tragic accident and so community members raised money for JoAnn & Ron Parks. They used the funds to purchase a car, take a vacation, and finally resettled in St. Louis.

Unknown to the Parks firefighters and special trained agents of the National Fire Protection Association kept investigating the fire further and they came to believe that the fire was a result of arson, and that JoAnn Parks was a serial arsonist and murderer. Two and half years after the fire she was convicted and sent to prison for life.

After spending more than twenty-five years in prison JoAnn learns that the California Innocence Project is interested in her case. A young lawyer named Raquel Cohen from this project believes that JoAnn was wrongfully convicted. She researches the case, determined to prove JoAnn's innocence and have her released. Will Raquel succeed?

I found this book a fascinating read. Perhaps there are places the author could have shortened the explanations of fire science and all of the forensics, fingerprint evaluations etc. but keep in mind this book is a true story and non-fiction.

HAPPY READING!