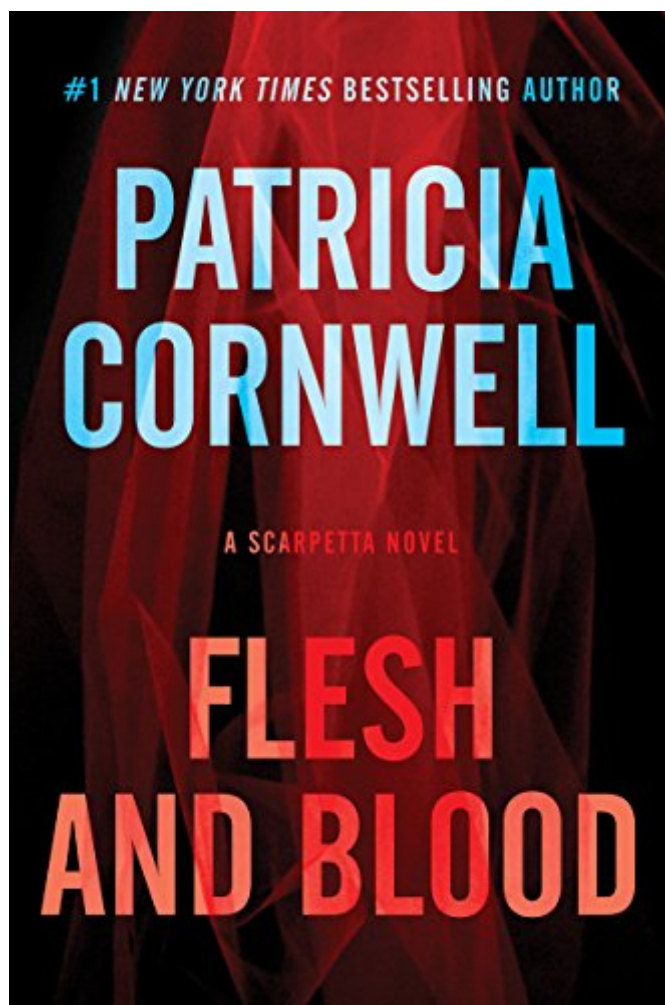


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Flesh And Blood: A Scarpetta Novel (Kay Scarpetta Book 22)



Synopsis

It's Dr. Kay Scarpetta's birthday, and she's about to head to Miami for a vacation with Benton Wesley, her FBI profiler husband, when she notices seven pennies on a wall behind their Cambridge house. Is this a kid's game? If so, why are all of the coins dated 1981 and so shiny they could be newly minted? Her cellphone rings, and Detective Pete Marino tells her there's been a homicide five minutes away. A high school music teacher has been shot with uncanny precision as he unloaded groceries from his car. No one has heard or seen a thing. In this 22nd Scarpetta novel, the master forensic sleuth finds herself in the unsettling pursuit of a serial sniper who leaves no incriminating evidence except fragments of copper. The shots seem impossible, yet they are so perfect they cause instant death. The victims appear to have had nothing in common, and there is no pattern to indicate where the killer will strike next. First New Jersey, then Massachusetts, and then the murky depths off the coast of South Florida, where Scarpetta investigates a shipwreck, looking for answers that only she can discover and analyze. And it is there that she comes face to face with shocking evidence that implicates her techno genius niece, Lucy, Scarpetta's own flesh and blood. Includes an exclusive excerpt from the riveting next novel in the Kay Scarpetta series, *DEPRAVED HEART*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I gave up on Cornwell's latest effort at less than halfway through. At my age, there is no point in spending time reading a book that has absolutely nothing to offer. Like many others, I suppose, I was first drawn to the Scarpetta series because of the fascinating mysteries that were being solved by forensics. And I do enjoy reading books that are published in a series. Most books that are written as a series are interesting because of character development: the Three Pines series by Louise Penny is a good example. When I pick up a new Louise Penny book, I feel like I am greeting old friends. When I began reading *Flesh and Blood*, I could only think of how very elitist, arrogant and egotistical Scarpetta has become. And how Lucy and Benton have both grown so very elusive and taciturn. And I grew so weary of the petty feud between Marino and Machado that I finally just gave up. As authors become more established, their editors must back off. The first one-third of this book is so repetitive, with Scarpetta commenting (to herself or the reader) that Marino is not aware of what is going on. Over and over. I cannot believe a competent editor would pass on it. And Marino's bullish incompetence stretches credulity. Why would anyone employ such an idiot? Yet she praises his investigative skill while she portrays him as a dunderhead. Cornwell often uses a present tense narrative device as means to create tension and immediacy. In this book, it only creates boredom and confusion. I surely will not buy another Scarpetta/Cornwell novel.

Less and less enchanted with the Kay Scarpetta novels, I nonetheless bought this based on the rave reviews I read here. I did finish this book in record time, because I just turned pages and pages at a time through mind-numbing descriptions of bullets and shooting recreations. I absolutely will not be tricked into buying another--very tired of Lucy the Wonder Girl, but mostly of the world of Dr. Scarpetta who is so important that bad guys seek her out as a target and go to unbelievably extraordinary means to rub her out. Where have all the interesting autopsies gone? Too much techno-showoff here, with murders tenuously tied together, and not enough character interactions....Where are the Scarpettas of yesteryear? They were fantastic.

Are you so broke that you have to split the story into two books? I invested time wading through this, only to find...no finish...so I have to buy the next book? Forget about it, you just lost a life time fan. Cliffhangers only work for television series.....

Very disappointing--Cornwell can and has written much better books. There is way too much "chatter" about personalities, Marino, Lucy, Benton, Scarpetta herself, etc. This is all filler and unrelated to the story. Also, why can't she think up a NEW story instead of having to hark back and reuse a very ancient character--it just doesn't sell, it's not enticing as a story. Most annoying is the ending: The "inclusive" bang with which it concludes is annoying. Who got shot? The story doesn't end, doesn't conclude. The reader is left hanging--I read a novel for interest, for relaxation, and want to have an ending. This "teaser" to get me to buy the next book just doesn't work for me. That Iris Johansen is doing this with her Eve books means that I will not buy another one until I am certain that each book "concludes". Now, I'll look in a bookstore copy--if I feel sufficiently motivated, which I may not--to look at the next Cornwell Scarpetta book to see if I can tell just where it picks up and if it will actually conclude when I plowed through it to the end. In case you can't tell, this once-fan of this series was totally turned off by this latest book.

I've been a reasonably faithful fan of the Scarpetta series and this one is a fairly good iteration -- it has an interesting plot and moves the Scarpetta story along quite nicely. In this 22nd Scarpetta novel, the Scarpetta finds herself in the middle of a nightmarish pursuit of a serial sniper who seems to leave no evidence except fragments of copper. The shots are so perfect, they cause instant death and seem impossible, and the death scenes aren't crime scenes because the killer was never within hundreds of yards of the victims. The victims seem to have nothing in common, and there is no pattern that might indicate where the Copperhead will strike next. First New Jersey, then Massachusetts, and then into the murky depths off the coast of South Florida, where Scarpetta dives a shipwreck, looking for answers that only she can discover and analyze. This would be a four or five star rating if the climax and ending weren't so awful. Kay ultimately confronts the antagonist, but you don't find out how she survived until she relays the story later -- so you don't experience the climactic battle first hand. The resolution isn't satisfying -- there are multiple unresolved threads, personal and professional, and I got the distinct sense Ms. Cornwell just ran out of steam here. Finally, amidst all the non-resolution, Kay and her husband go to bed, she turns out the light..then the last line of the book..."and then I heard it...SNAP". That's it. SNAP what? SNAP, a bomb goes off? SNAP, a reaction to her husband's good night comment? What??? Very confusing and disappointing. For true Scarpetta fans, I'm sure there is some value here. For me, it's a disappointment.

I really enjoyed Cornwell's earlier Scarpetta novels. The last few have been disappointments and this joins the list of the disappointing. I thought I would try one more and I'm sorry I did...this is last one I will buy. Way too much angst and time spent having the characters doubt each other, it just got tedious. Also, the ending was abrupt and didn't really resolve the tension of the story. Bummer!

I did not like the disconnected story line. Characters and suspects appear from nowhere as do the interpersonal relationships that seem to be filler.

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