



Blow Fly: Scarpetta (Book 12) (Kay Scarpetta)

By Patricia Cornwell

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Settling into her new life as a private forensic consultant, Kay Scarpetta agrees to investigate a cold case in Louisiana—the baffling eight-year-old murder of a woman with a history of blackouts and violent outbursts. Then she receives news that chills her to the core: Jean-Baptiste Chandonne—the vicious and unrepentant Wolfman who pursued her to her very doorstep—has asked to see her. From his cell on death row, he demands an audience with the legendary Dr. Scarpetta. With her friends and family by her side, Scarpetta tries to guess what sort of endgame this madman has in mind—how, if at all, it's related to the Louisiana case—and then confronts the shock of her life: a blow that will force her to question the loyalty and trust of all she holds dear...

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"Please don't go there. The past is the past," sighs New York Assistant District Attorney Jaime Berger, who herself was introduced in Cornwell's last Kay Scarpetta novel, *The Last Precinct* (2000). Alas, many of Cornwell's fans are bound to agree. One fascinating nonfiction bestseller (*Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper, Case Closed*) later, Cornwell now returns to Scarpetta, formerly Virginia's chief medical examiner. From the start, however, the formidable author is up against the equally formidable task of getting her charismatic main character off ice and back in action. We encounter Scarpetta languishing in a crumbling little rental house in Florida. She has taken refuge there and become a private forensic consultant after she was driven from her job for her alleged involvement in the murder of a deputy police chief. The violent death of her lover, Benton Wesley, the brilliant FBI psychological profiler, has left her filled with an unappeasable grief. When the coroner in Baton Rouge asks her advice on a cold case concerning an affluent woman found dead of a drug overdose in a seedy hotel, it seems little more than a diversion. Yet it becomes clear that the overdose may be related to a fresh string of serial killings. Also disturbing Scarpetta's somber peace is a troubling letter from someone out to kill her, the sick and obsessed death-row inmate Jean-Baptiste. When Scarpetta is at last allowed to get back to business, she is a feisty, independent powerhouse whose capacity to concentrate and observe rivals Sherlock Holmes's. But too much of this book is bound up in retrospective musings about events in previous books. The great Scarpetta, her fiery crime-busting niece, Lucy, and a colorful supporting cast deserve better.

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From *Booklist*

Kay Scarpetta fans will miss their favorite forensic pathologist in this new thriller, as Cornwell cedes much of the spotlight to other characters in the long-running series. Lucy, Kay's defiant niece, and Marino, the bad-tempered, opinionated cop, are here, as are several familiar depraved psychopaths--among them, "Wolfman" Jean-Baptiste Chandonne and his twin brother, who first surfaced in *Black Notice* (2000). It appears that Chandonne, whose execution date is drawing near, wants to see Kay, ostensibly to reveal information about his family that will ensure the collapse of their Mob cartel and to have her administer the drug that will end his life. But, as usual in Cornwell's more recent books, absolutely nothing is what it seems. Granted, there are some compelling (and gruesome) moments, and a few loose ends from previous books are finally taken care of... Otherwise, though, this is a murky stew, indeed, with action careening in way too many directions. Oh, for a return to the Cornwell who created the tough but vulnerable Scarpetta, who, at center stage, used her intellect and forensic training to solve a more straightforward mystery. *Stephanie Zvirin*

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Review

...Cornwall writes, as usual, with unwavering intensity in this grisly, fast-paced thriller. The effect: utterly chilling. B+ -- *Entertainment Weekly*, October 17, 2003

Patricia Cornwell is on target - and spectacularly so - with her latest Kay Scarpetta thriller... -- *Connecticut Post*, October 26, 2003

This is, some ways, the most shocking Scarpetta installment... Fans will definitely want it, though. Highly recommended. -- *Library Journal*, starred review, November 15, 2003

[A] grisly fast-paced thriller...utterly chilling. (*Entertainment Weekly*) A story so compelling that even long-time readers will be stunned by its twists and turns. (*Chicago Tribune*) Gruesome and suspenseful. (*New York Daily News*) --Amazon

No dust jacket. Great shape --Seller

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Svendsen:

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Beverly McClendon:

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