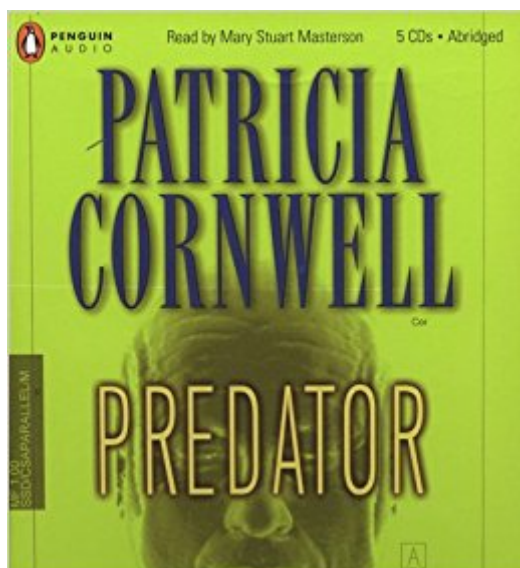


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Predator (A Scarpetta Novel)



Synopsis

The exhilarating new Dr. Kay Scarpetta novel from America's number-one-bestselling crime writer.

Abridged CDs - 5 CDs, 6 hours

Book Information

Series: A Scarpetta Novel

Audio CD

Publisher: Penguin Audio; Abridged edition (October 20, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0143058274

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Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.8 x 5.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 2.3 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (591 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #635,051 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #17 inÂ Books > Books on CD >

Authors, A-Z > (C) > Cornwell, Patricia #973 inÂ Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

#1169 inÂ Books > Books on CD > General

Customer Reviews

I've been reading Patricia Cornwell's Scarpetta novels on and off for some time now. There was a time when these stories were innovative, and even groundbreaking in their introduction of the strong female lead into the serial killer, suspense genre. But something happened along the way. I don't know if Cornwell changed her story lines for her own reasons or due to bad advice, but rather than forensic suspense the stories turned into adventures in dysfunctional families. Scarpetta became a flaming codependent trying to mother Lucy, whose goal in life was staying in trouble. And Pete Marino, never the most likeable of characters became increasingly large, loud and obnoxious. To put it bluntly, the killers were often the most attractive characters in the stories. Cornwell long ago fell off my 'buy in hardback' list. But when I picked up Predator the blurb sounded pretty good, and I decided to give Cornwell another try. The story finds Kay Scarpetta, Pete Marino, and a whole cast of crimestoppers working at the National Forensic Academy, the institute Lucy created so that she could work as a free agent. All isn't well at the Academy, strange events and thefts are interspersed with intense personality conflicts and mistrust until it is obvious that a crisis is brewing. In the meantime a subtle series of deaths and disappearances come to light that seem to link Basil Jenrette, an imprisoned serial killer who has become the subject of Benton Wesley's research into

the deviant mind, with killers down in Florida where the academy is. The connections surface painstakingly slowly after in depth forensic work. This is the formula which made Cornwell a success, and I hoped for a return to the Scarpetta of the early stories. Unfortunately, that was not to be.

I remember loving the early Scarpetta books. Flanked by an array of interesting characters, she was definitely front and center in every story (as was proven by the fact that the books were written in the first person). She was a capable medical examiner, but also a skilled cook (Cornwell's delicious descriptions of Kay's Italian recipes in her gourmet kitchen were so vivid, you could almost smell the food), and a woman with a sense of humor. She and her sidekicks (Marino, Lucy, Benton, etc.), though surrounded by tragedy and death, did have happy moments, and were capable of being happy at times. Then something happened a couple of books ago: after a tired plotline about a European "werewolf" which spanned a couple of books, the point of view changed to third person, the story became much more of an ensemble cast with Scarpetta as one of the characters, and everything became permeated by a depressing, unhappy, dreary atmosphere that sucked the happiness out of the characters, and turned them into automatons who did nothing else but work, argue, and deal with death. Gone was any "off-time", sense of humor, or even sense of hope. Gone was also any sense of realism, as every new books showed Lucy's fortune more and more outlandish with mansions, academies, motorcycles, helicopters, improbable stunts and toys of all kinds. This time we're asked to believe Lucy's fortune has started a private "academy" that supports police investigation. But what happened to Lucy's previous endeavors, The Last Precinct? What about other characters present in the previous book that have been dropped without so much as a mention?

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