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The Last Precinct, Abridged Edition



Synopsis

The eleventh Scarpetta novel, in which the Chief Medical Examiner is under a Grand Jury investigation for murder. She knows she's being framed and she no longer knows who she can trust...Physically and psychologically bruised by her encounter with the killer Chandonne, Dr Kay Scarpetta has to leave her home in the hands of the police team investigating the attack. She finds shelter with an old friend, Anna Zenner, but it is not the haven of security she needs when she discovers that Anna has been sub-poenaed to appear before a Grand Jury which is investigating Scarpetta for murder. Kay knows she is being framed and she also knows she can trust no-one. Meanwhile it appears that Chandonne killed a woman in New York before his murderous spree in Virginia, but when Scarpetta looks more closely into that case with the NY prosecutor Jaime Berger, proof of his guilt is far from certain -- in fact she begins to believe that he may not be the perpetrator of any of the crimes he is accused of. As she follows the forensic trail to the real killer she gradually realises that someone has been spinning a web for years with the aim of entrapping her. Who is it, and why are they so desperate to be rid of her?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

By the time I had read The Last Precinct, I had already seen Patricia Cornwell give several interviews about it, so I had a certain expectation about what kind of book this would be. For the most part, her descriptions were accurate, which is unfortunate. From the beginning, this is a completely different Kay Scarpetta than we've read about before. Cornwell claimed in her interviews that this could be a stand-alone book, that it wasn't necessary to read the previous books to

understand this one, but I disagree strongly. It literally picks up where the last one left off, and if you didn't read Black Notice, chances are you won't have a clue what's going on. There are half-hearted attempts to bring the reader up to speed on the various characters, but they seem forced and uncomfortable. The storyline is much the same as in previous books, despite Cornwell's assertion that this is the first time we see Kay in professional jeopardy. There's a bad guy, Kay gets personally involved, Lucy goes off on some weird tangent, Kay's professional judgement is called into question..the bare bones of this story are the same as the others. What bothered me most about this book was the extremely sudden and startling change in the way we see Kay, and through her, all the other characters. She suddenly analyzes every thought, every emotion; we see all of the characters in a new light, and it is almost without exception, unflattering. Suddenly we are literally forced to consider Kay's sexual orientation, Marino's weird attraction to her; even the deceased Benton is re-examined and somehow comes off looking the worse for it. Cornwell said in the interviews I saw that she doesn't model Kay after herself, but there are several aspects of this book that almost feel voyeuristic.

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