

## FORENSIC MYSTERIES

**Bass, Jefferson. *The Inquisitor's Key*.** Miranda Lovelady is evacuating a newly discovered chamber beneath the Palace of the Popes in Avignon, France, when she discovers a stone chest bearing a stunning claim: inside lie the bones of Jesus of Nazareth. Miranda and her boss, forensic anthropologist Dr. Bill Brockton, are initially quite skeptical, but evidence of authenticity soon begins to grow. Thus begins a deadly tug-of-war between the anthropologists, the Vatican, and a murderous zealot who hopes to use the bones to trigger the end of time. (This is the seventh in a series that begins with **Carved in Bone**.)

**Cornwell, Patricia. *Postmortem*.** Four women have nothing in common except that they were all strangled in their bedrooms early on Saturday mornings. Medical examiner Kay Scarpetta is determined to unmask the "Mr. Nobody" who is leaving a trail of bodies, but very few clues, throughout Richmond, Virginia. But someone is trying to sabotage Kay's investigation from the inside, and this someone wants her dead. The first, and possibly the best, installment of this series is based on a real case.

**Deaver, Jeffery. *The Steel Kiss*.** Amelia Sachs, the eyes-and-ears protégé of quadriplegic criminologist Lincoln Rhyme, is chasing a killer through a department store when the escalator collapses, leaving a bystander horribly mangled in the gears. Sacha and Rhyme soon realize that this event was no accident as they find themselves up against a brilliant killer who loves to turn common products into murder weapons. There are plenty of plot twists in this twelfth book of the Rhyme and Sachs series. (The series begins with **The Bone Collector**.)

**Elkins, Aaron. *Skeleton Dance*.** Gideon Oliver, Seattle's "skeleton detective," is called to Les Eyzies-de-Tayac, a village in France home to the largest concentration of prehistoric fossils in Europe. It seems a local dog has unearthed something far from historic: some very tasty – and very modern – human bones. The bones may be tied to a past hoax involving Neanderthal man and the prestigious Institut de Prehistoire. This tenth installment of a series featuring a protagonist who wavers between sharp-eyed precision and absent-minded obliviousness is written with a lighter touch than most forensic mysteries. (The series begins with **Fellowship of Fear**.)

**George, Elizabeth. Well-Schooled in Murder.** New Scotland Yard's odd couple, aristocratic Inspector Thomas Lynley and working-class Sergeant Barbara Havers, is called to the heart of West Sussex to investigate the disappearance – and then sadly, the murder – of a young public school boy. With the help of forensic scientist Simon St. James, they begin to unlock the secrets – each one worse than the one before – of the closed society of this elite school. Something extraordinarily evil is going on behind Bredgar Chamber's cloistered walls. This is the third book in the Lynley-Havers series, not all of which feature St. James. (The series begins with **A Great Deliverance**.)

**Gerritsen, Tess. Ice Cold.** (The basis for the TV series **Rizzoli & Isles**) Boston medical examiner, Maura Isles, joins a group of friends for a ski trip to Wyoming. When their SUV stalls the skiers seek refuge in the small village of Kingdom Come. There twelve eerily identical houses stand abandoned. Meals are still on the tables, cars in the garages, but the residents have vanished. (This is the eighth episode of a series that begins with **The Surgeon**.)

**Johansen, Iris. The Killing Game.** When nine skeletons are unearthed in rural Georgia, forensic sculptor Eve Duncan hopes one of them is that of her daughter, Bonnie, murdered nearly ten years ago. Determined to remain objective, Eve signs on to the case. But the killer has other ideas; he wants Eve involved. He knows everything about her, watches her every move and begins to manipulate her like a puppeteer. This second book in this series should be read with all the houselights turned up bright. (The series begins with **Face of Deception**.)

**Palmer, Michael. Second Opinion.** Dr. Thea Sperelakis, diagnosed as a teen with Asperger's syndrome, has always been an outsider. She has a brilliant medical mind, and a remarkable recall of details, but a dismaying inability to judge the emotions of other people. Then her physician father is nearly killed by a hit-and-run driver in what seems more and more to be no accident. Who would want him dead? Her father is in a deep coma; the answer is trapped in his brain . . . until he looks at Thea and begins slowly to blink a terrifying message. Palmer has created a cat-and-mouse game where one woman must confront a conspiracy of doctors to uncover an evil practice that touches every single person who has ever had a medical test. **The Second Opinion** will make you question - everything.

**Reichs, Kathy. Death du Jour.** (The inspiration behind the TV series **Bones**). Forensic anthropologist, Dr. Temperance Brennan, is in frozen Montreal unearthing the century-old remains of a nun about to be canonized. But the bones are not where they should be. This disappearance, a horrific arson case, a missing teacher and a doomsday cult all combine to carry Tempe to North Carolina to find some answers. This is the second book in a series that critics have variously called "scary," "accomplished and chilling" and "fresh and funny." (The series begins with **Deja Dead**.)