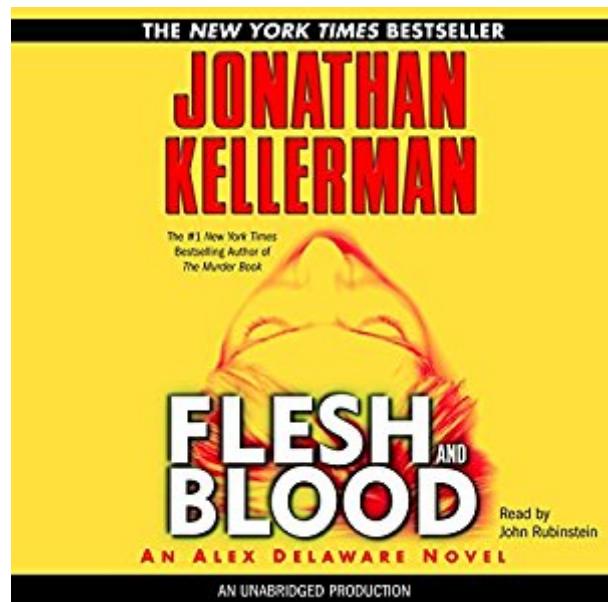


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Flesh And Blood: Alex Delaware, Book 15



Synopsis

Perennial and acknowledged master of the psychological thriller Jonathan Kellerman has created a riveting and memorable Alex Delaware novel about a troubled and elusive young woman whose brutal murder forces the brilliant psychologist-detective to confront his own fallibility. Lauren Teague is a beautiful, defiant, borderline-delinquent teenager when her parents bring her to Alex Delaware's office. But for all Alex's skill and effort, Lauren resists - angrily, provocatively. Reluctantly the psychologist chalks Lauren up as one of the inevitable failures of a challenging profession. But years later, when Alex encounters Lauren as a stag party's featured entertainment, both doctor and patient are stricken with shame. And the ultimate horror takes place when, soon after, Lauren's brutalized corpse is found dumped in an alley. Alex disregards the advice of his trusted friend, LAPD detective Milo Sturgis, and jeopardizes his relationship with longtime lover Robin Castagna in order to pursue Lauren's murderer. As he investigates his young patient's troubled past, Alex enters the shadowy worlds of fringe psychological experimentation and the sex industry and then into mortal danger when lust and big money collide in Southern California. Jonathan Kellerman's LA is evil, seductive, and unforgiving, and *Flesh and Blood* is mind opening in its drama of a driven man's personal quest, breathtaking in its ingenious plot, filled with unforgettable characters, and topped off by a terrifying climax. This is suspense fiction at its finest.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 13 hours and 18 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: August 4, 2016

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B01JMU6Z0C

Best Sellers Rank: #88 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers > Suspense
#772 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature #973 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Suspense

Customer Reviews

Alex Delaware chalked up his attempt at helping a young, defiant, angry teenager by the name of

Lauren Teague, as a failure when she walked out of his office and out of his professional life. Years later, Teague and Delaware meet at a stag party where Teague appears as the night's entertainment. However, the reunion is brief and short lived when her body turns up in a dumpster. Delaware, the avenging angel in pursuit of justice, is determined to find the person who committed the crime. He becomes so intensely involved in his mission that he risks losing Robin, the love of his life, and Miles, his best friend and co-worker. Kellerman takes a walk through the wild, seedy side of life where pornography is king and call-girls are nothing more than a replaceable commodity. Kellerman's latest book is jam-packed with suspense from cover to cover. While his previous novel "Dr. Death" may be seen as somewhat of a disappointment to many readers, Kellerman redeems himself in this one. This is, without question, the Kellerman readers have come to know and admire; here we have Kellerman at his finest.

The Alex Delaware of old is back in Kellerman's new novel. The last four in the series have been very disappointing to many of his long time fans, and Kellerman goes back to basics with this tale of a disappearance/murder that personally affects the good doc, since it happened to a former patient that he was never able to reach. In the novel, the old obsessive compulsive Alex Delaware surfaces again. He takes the crime personally, and continues to follow up some blind alleys, driving both Milo and Robin crazy with his inability to let it go. His instincts are basically good, however, and you second guess the multitude of possible outcomes all the way through the book's end. It feels as though Kellerman has decided to ground the doctor in the type of cases and well-intentioned investigations he crafted for Delaware in the early books of the series. It is good to have the real Alex back, and to have Kellerman fully flesh out a story, unlike the botched and tedious plots of "Monster" and "The Web". With this book, Kellerman wins back a fan!

Lauren Teague, former delinquent, ex-patient of Alex Delaware is found dead in the bottom of a dumpster. There is no shortage of suspects or motives for Lauren had led a complicated, secretive life. A party girl, straight A student, generous to children and friends down on their luck, exquisite personal taste coupled with ugly job skills; Lauren has had bad luck, and it is catching. The strongest area in the book is the incisive portraits of the secondary characters. The uneasy, almost saint-like Ben Dugger, the highly verbal, artistic gay roommate of Lauren's, the brutish, slovenly but shrewd Lyle Teague just sparkle on the page. The description of the fictional "Playboy Mansion" is a brilliant invention. Even protagonist Alex shows an obsessive/compulsive streak that sharpens up his sometimes-bland character. The book is well plotted, though the pace uneven. So what was wrong?

First and foremost, I found Lauren unbelievable. She came across as a set of contradictory traits that never added up to a total person. As she was the crux of the novel, it was a fatal flaw. Far too much time was devoted to the wavelets in Alex and Robin's insipid relationship. A secondary plot was superfluous, distracting from the main story and contributed nothing except a few characters that were not even remotely involved with the main plot. "Flesh and Blood" definitely has its moments, just not enough of them.

Lauren Teague is a beautiful, but defiant teenager when her parents bring her to Alex Delaware's office. After only several visit's Lauren decides she does not need Delaware any longer, giving up her visit's to continue on her road to self destruction. Alex is left puzzled with the feeling the young girl wanted to continue her visit's but something was preventing her from doing so, none the less, Alex lets the case go, even getting stiffed for an un-paid bill. Many years later, Alex happens to attend a bachelor party where up the stage two women are putting on a graphic sex show, to his shock, even though it has been many years, Alex recognizes one of the women to be Lauren Teague. After their chance encounter, Lauren gets in contact with Alex to explain what happened so many years ago, and brings him up to date with what is going on now. After this Lauren never gets in touch with him again. Now, some more years later, Alex receives a phone call from Lauren's mom asking for his help, it seems Lauren has disappeared... Weeks after the disappearance, Lauren is found dead, shot with her own hand gun. Now more than ever before, Alex puts his life, as well as his relationship with Robin, on the line, for the search for Lauren's killer will bring him into the seedy world of high priced call girls, drugs, and psychological experimentation. 'Flesh And Blood' is easily the BEST Alex Delaware novel in years. The plot is complex, but stays focused, and just when you think you have figured it out, the twists shock you without being confusing. Fast-paced, and smoothly written, readers will be captivated by the story of sex, and money. Jonathan Kellerman is the leading author of psychological suspense, and his new novel will not only satisfy his many fans, but win him a slew of new ones. Sure to be a huge best-seller, 'Flesh And Blood' is a MUST read! Nick Gonnella

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