



Black Notice: Scarpetta (Book 10) (Kay Scarpetta)

By Patricia Cornwell

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The decomposed remains of a stowaway lead Dr. Kay Scarpetta on an international search to Interpol's headquarters in Lyon, France—and on a mission that will pull her in two opposite directions: toward protecting her career or toward the truth.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The postmortem is in--*Black Notice*, the 10th in Patricia Cornwell's Scarpetta series, is a gore-splattered, intensely exciting read. As winter grips Richmond, Virginia, an air of somberness pervades chief medical examiner Kay Scarpetta's world. Her beloved niece Lucy is involved in a dangerous undercover police operation in Miami, and auntie fears for her life. A tyrannical new deputy chief, Diane Bray, wants to get Kay's department under her jurisdiction. Meanwhile, back at the office, someone has tinkered with the e-mail system, stealing Kay's identity, and sending off slanderous and hurtful messages. Emotionally battered, Scarpetta fears she is going insane. Or, could it be that someone is deliberately sowing this harvest of sorrow?

Despite her personal problems, Scarpetta is still the reigning diva at the department of death. She is sent to investigate the putrefied remains of a man found inside a container ship, "eyes bulged froglike, and the scalp and beard were sloughing off with the outer layer of darkening skin." Kay finds strange, animal-like hairs on the man's clothing--the same hairs that she discovers on a murdered store clerk a few days later. In actuality, the bizarre killings extend well beyond Virginia; whoever killed the Richmond victims also butchered people in France. Kay and police captain Pete Marino are whisked off to Paris where they must collect top-secret information from a Paris morgue, and avoid becoming victims themselves.

This macabre tome is the stuff that classic Scarpetta tales are made of: creepy but compulsive autopsy scenes, plentiful plot twists, and the compelling, if slightly more vulnerable chief medical examiner herself.
--*Naomi Gesinger*

From Publishers Weekly

It's like a splash of cold water on a hot day to be plunged, after the irritating third-person satire of Cornwell's last novel, *Southern Cross* (1998), back into the bracing narration of medical examiner Kay Scarpetta. As in the nine Scarpettas past (*Point of Origin*, etc.), here it's not the novel's events, startling as they are, that propel the story so much as the deep-hearted responses of Kay, as real a hero as any in thriller fiction, to the "evil" Aher wordAthat threatens. Evil wears several faces here, from petty to monstrous. Most insidious is the office sabotageAinsubordination, thefts, fraudulent e-mailsAthat's making the grieving Kay look as if she's lost her grip since her lover's murder in *Point of Origin*. More destructive are the overt attempts by calculating Richmond, Va., deputy police chief Diane Bray to ruin Kay's career as well as that of Kay's old friend, Capt. Pete Marino. Then there's the wild rage at life that's consuming Kay's niece, a DEA agent. FinallyAthe plot wire that binds the sometimes scattered plotAthere are the mutilation killings by the French serial killer self-styled "Loup-Garou" Awerewolf. The forensic sequences boom with authority; the brief action sequences explode on the pageAin the finale, overbearingly so; the interplay between Kay and Marino is boisterous as always, and there's an atmospheric sidetrip to Paris and an affecting romantic misadventure for lonely Kay. A thunderhead of disquietude hangs over this compulsively readable novel, sometimes loosing storms of suspense; but to Cornwell's considerable credit, the unease arises ultimately not from the steady potential for violence, but from a more profound horror: the vulnerability of a good woman like Kay to a world beset by the corrupt, the cruel, the demonic. One million first printing; \$750,000 ad/promo; Literary Guild, Doubleday Book Club and Mystery Guild main selections; unabridged and abridged audio versions; foreign rights sold in eight countries.

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From Library Journal

Kay Scarpetta's on the case when the body of a stowaway is found in a sealed container on a ship arriving in Richmond from Belgium.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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