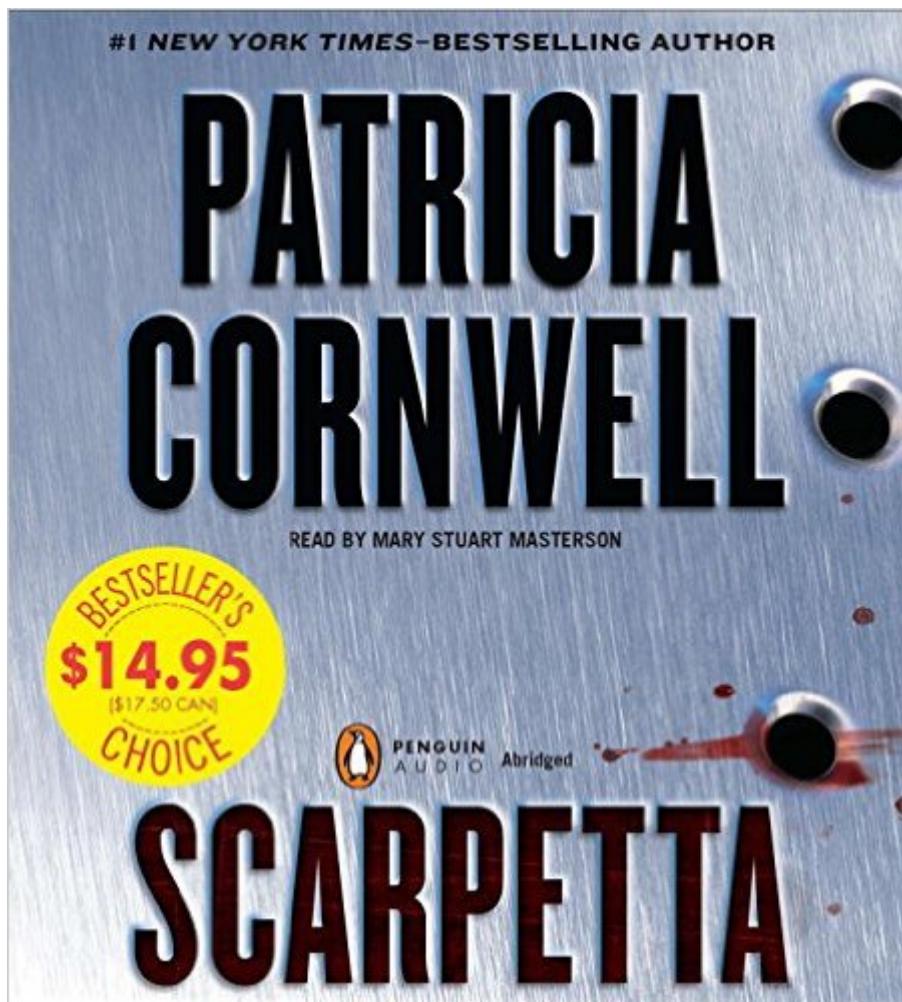


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Scarpetta: Scarpetta (Book 16)



Synopsis

From America's #1 bestselling crime writers comes the extraordinary new Kay Scarpetta novel. Leaving behind her private forensic pathology practice in Charleston, South Carolina, Kay Scarpetta accepts an assignment in New York City, where the NYPD has asked her to examine an injured man on Bellevue Hospital's psychiatric prison ward. The handcuffed and chained patient, Oscar Bane, has specifically asked for her, and when she literally has her gloved hands on him, he begins to talk—and the story he has to tell turns out to be one of the most bizarre she has ever heard. The injuries, he says, were sustained in the course of a murder . . . that he did not commit. Is Bane a criminally insane stalker who has fixated on Scarpetta? Or is his paranoid tale true, and is it he who is being spied on, followed and stalked by the actual killer? The one thing Scarpetta knows for certain is that a woman has been tortured and murdered—and more violent deaths will follow. Gradually, an inexplicable and horrifying truth emerges: Whoever is committing the crimes knows where his prey is at all times. Is it a person, a government? And what is the connection between the victims? In the days that follow, Scarpetta; her forensic psychologist husband, Benton Wesley; and her niece, Lucy, who has recently formed her own forensic computer investigation firm in New York, will undertake a harrowing chase through cyberspace and the all-too-real streets of the city—an odyssey that will take them at once to places they never knew, and much, much too close to home. Throughout, Cornwell delivers shocking twists and turns, and the kind of cutting-edge technology that only she can provide. Once again, she proves her exceptional ability to entertain and enthrall.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The name of the latest Patricia Cornwell crime thriller is well-chosen -- "Scarpetta" revolves solely around Scarpetta. Fortunately Cornwell seems to be attempting to get back to the roots of what made her series a string of uber-bestsellers, with a greater emphasis on the gruesome crimes. Unfortunately the first two-thirds of the book drag like a deflated balloon, and too often the book feels like an ode to psychobabble and Scarpetta's awesomeness. Scarpetta is called back to New York when Oscar Bane, a man with achondroplasia (dwarfism), turns himself into the police. He's the only suspect in his girlfriend's murder, but he swears he didn't do it. So Scarpetta is forced to sift through the lies that Oscar tells her, as well as some truly bizarre evidence (a random assortment of DNA in the victim's vagina). Despite Oscar's obvious paranoia, she believes that he really didn't kill his girlfriend. Meanwhile, Benton is attempting to come to terms with Scarpetta's near-rape, especially since Marino has been assigned to the NYPD and an online muckraker has published a column about the event. As Scarpetta sifts through the evidence, Lucy's computer wizardry unearths some disturbing new information about the victim -- and the online Scarpetta impersonator that may also be a vicious sadistic killer... In many ways, "Scarpetta" is a big sprawling step back in the right direction for Patricia Cornwell. Cutting edge technology, gruesome crimes and lots of sifting for clues are all included, and Cornwell successfully integrates some seemingly irrelevant plot points -- such as the victim and suspect's achondroplasia -- so that they become important parts of the solution. Unfortunately, "Scarpetta" is slow. Very slow.

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