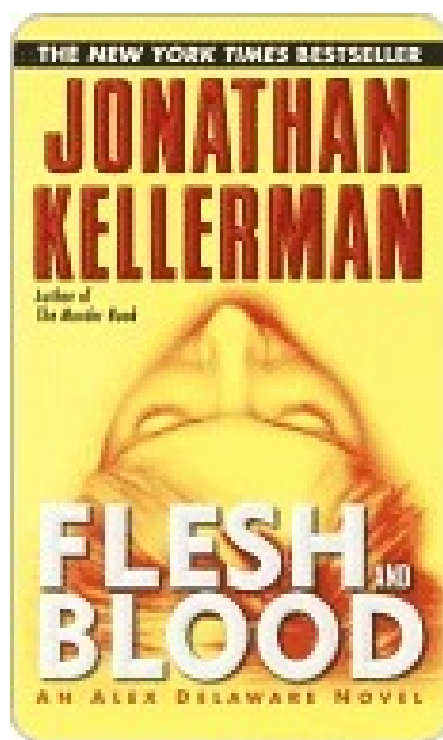




Flesh and Blood

Jonathan Kellerman

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Perennial bestseller and acknowledged master of the psychological thriller, Jonathan Kellerman has created his most riveting and memorable work to date in the 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 stucken 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 L.A. is evil, seductive, erotic, 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.

From the Hardcover edition.

Flesh and Blood Details

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From Reader Review Flesh and Blood for online ebook

Jenny Macdonald says

Bit of a mediocre thriller. Not nearly as exciting as promised on the cover blurb. I struggled to connect with Alex Delaware, the Psychiatrist, in this book, especially as he'd only met Lauren twice yet he goes on a crusade to find her killer, which I never quite got my head around. There were a ton of theories that Alex gave out over the course of the investigation which I found to be a little frustrating since his ideas about the murders were constantly changing, and mostly wrong. Not sure I will be in a hurry to read any more of this author's work in the future.

shruti says

Pretty boring. More than required characters are present in the book which just tends to stretch on the story without adding any interesting twist.

Nancy says

One of Alex Delaware's former patients turns up dead, and he gets involved although his counseling relationship with her had been brief and ten years ago. In the intervening years, he had run into her once when he attending a bachelor party and she was the stripper, and his sleuthing has him follow leads that show how vulnerable and misguided young women can get sucked into prostitution and porn movies. Delaware risks his relationships with his friend Milo and girl friend Robin as he investigates the case on his own.

Tim says

So I was looking to read (well, listen to) Patricia Cornwell's latest Kay Scarpetta mystery, "Flesh and Blood," when it occurred to me that I already had a book on my shelf with that very same title, by Jonathan Kellerman. It's been quite a while since I'd had an Alex Delaware "fix," so I decided to try the latter first, then perhaps compare them. Well, I got the audiobook out of the library, and listened to about half of it before I had to bring it back; so I said to myself, "No matter, I still have the paperback, why not read that, and get Ms. Cornwell's audiobook out of the library, won't that be fun?" Well...I'm going to recount the complications attendant upon this unwise decision in my review of Ms. Cornwell's book, which will be coming soon.

It was a pleasure reacquainting myself with Dr. Delaware, burned-out psychologist who now acts as a consultant to the Police, mostly in the person of Milo Sturgis, gay Homicide Detective. And of course we have Alex's live-in guitar-fashioner-to-the-rock-stars, Robin, and their dog, a stray French bulldog named Blanche.

In this novel, the mother of Lauren Teague, a rebellious teenage girl Alex had treated some years ago (and more recently for one session) contacts Alex because the (now young woman) has gone missing. Inbetween those times, Alex had attended a bachelor party in which Lauren had made an appearance as a stripper. Well,

Lauren ends up murdered, and Milo asks for Alex's help. As with most of these novels, the events and people behind this murder are convoluted and take us to the sex-for-hire business, including the aging editor of a men's magazine, resembling Hugh Hefner in a number of ways, drugs, lifestyles of the rich and famous, familial jealousies, academic/psychological research on attractiveness, and all manner of people of questionable moral character. In the process, Alex becomes enamored with the editor's ex-wife, thus threatening his relationship with Robin (which has gone through myriad ups and downs anyway).

Per usual, the pages turn quickly, and the action leads to several surprises that I (at least) didn't see coming, with a satisfying denouement. I was glad to visit Alex again, won't wait so long to return.

Jerry B says

Good Plot, Bad Action...

We've read every Kellerman (both husband AND wife!) book, so eagerly snapped this one up a week ago. We thought the plot was reasonable and interesting, but when Alex Delaware starting running around like an idiot, tailing potential criminals, rescuing their family members from drowning, and posing as a romantic date to get inside information, that's too far-fetched for us. There's a fair amount of tension with his life partner, Robin, over his antics and involvement in a case not even officially assigned by the police; and even Alex's detective buddy Milo joins in getting fed up with our otherwise usually oh so professional psychologist. That's the trouble -- when you've spent years developing a character people love, you can't have that character go out of character. Get that? I wish the Editor had.

Still, not a bad read, just uncharacteristically implausible. {3.5}

Rose says

I'd read this before but couldn't remember the plot, so I got to enjoy it again. I did find the ending, in which Shawna's disappearance is cleared up, a bit unrealistic and too much trying to quickly sew up all the loose ends. The professor responsible for hiding her body cracked too quickly, I thought. Alex is just a little bit too good to be true.

Plus, as I'd forgotten since she hasn't been around so much in recent books, Robin is really annoying - just so stropky. I now regret saying thank goodness Alex and Robin got back together in the last book!

The audiobook reader has done other Kellerman books, so his voice for Alex Delaware sounds right, but annoyingly he makes just about all the other characters sound awful, giving them supercilious, whining, nasal voices.

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

I read and enjoyed this when it was first published somewhere around 2001.

Enjoyed the re-read just as much.

Larry says

I read this book, wearing humble sweat pants, somewhat worn yet comfortable. An old T-Rex t shirt, hunting socks to ward off the fall chill on the floor. I furrowed my brow, squinting into the distance as though the answer to life's mysteries was visible above the hearth, which crackled enthusiastically. I imagined Delaware, black cardigan over tan chinos, pondering this week's murder. His deep set eyes a window to the clues hidden in every character's attire, his pouty mouth clueing us into his uncanny ability to describe in excruciating detail the appearance, mannerisms and minutiae of every other Motherfucking character in the book, extending it's length by exponential exponents. Exponents, which appear in too-tight white denim, under a blue silk t-shirt and black double breasted Italian summer wool.

Veronica says

Well, one and a half stars, because I finished it, but really ... it was rubbish. The main character spends his time cooking up ludicrous theories on the basis of no evidence, which, no matter how far-fetched, turn out to be true. I started actually laughing at the fact that in every scene, Kellerman describes in meticulous, adjective-laden detail what the characters are wearing. What's with that? It would have been half the length if he'd cut that out. Once or twice, OK. But every freaking time?? It's a thriller, and it actually managed to be dull a lot of the time. I didn't even care who did it (and the true baddie wasn't introduced till very late on anyway).

Admittedly I don't normally read thrillers -- I got this from a BookCrossing virtual bookbox where you pick books based on their first sentences. But I liked his son's *The Brutal Art* (another BookCrossing first sentence find, oddly enough) a lot better than this.

Charley Girl says

Who doesn't like Alex Delaware? Alex is inquisitive or is it nosy? I don't know but it makes for a great story. I didn't figure out who the bad guy was and couldn't figure out how the murders were related so I really like the book. The one downfall was it was a bit too long for me.

Milo, the homosexual cop is always fun to read about. I picture him as Grizzly Adam with marshmallows inside. Robin, Alex's girlfriend, is the most stable person in the book. Calm, logical, loving and seems to hold Alex to reality.

I guess the moral of this story is if you are going to be a hooker, you are bound to run into some trouble. Who would have thought?

Tk Good says

I have read many of the Alex Delaware novels as I love Kellerman's style and the Delaware/Sturgis relationship is always entertaining.

But this one wasn't as great as some others. The story was interesting but cluttered. And I could not get past the fact that he got so involved in a patient he had only seen twice years ago, that's just not believable. I will continue to read Kellerman though, he's one of my favorite writers of this genre.

Barbara says

I may give up on Alex Delaware. The plots and ridiculous situations have become totally unrealistic. Having Alex following suspects and drawing conclusions based on nothing but his supposed superior psychological profiling abilities? And passing his actions off as what? And Milo? Alex does more off the grid police work than Milo AND the police department let's him get away with the stupid antics that I would view as obstruction. Three stars on this one was a stretch.

Bart says

This is among the least enjoyable of the Delaware novels. It was part of what I'd call the mid-series slump for author Kellerman.

Tara Brown says

I'm not sure how Milo ever solves a case without Alex. Milo is supposed to be this hotshot detective with a great solve rate but it's Alex that always solves the murder first. Alex that always finds the hidden clues. Alex that always pulls at the right thread. The premise of this is a little far fetched. The mother of a patient Alex attempted to treat years ago calls him out of the blue to find her missing daughter (the patient). Alex only had about two sessions with said patient that yielded no real treatment (not for lack of trying on Alex's part). The now adult patient seemed to hold Alex in the high regards even though she never participated in treatment or cared about being there. And good old Alex goes out of his way to be over-involved to find out what happened to the girl. Milo picks and chooses who he intimidates. And Alex is so obsessed with someone else's job that he's risking his relationship with Robin. The two together annoy me so I don't mind a possible breakup. The author always goes out of his way to always describe Alex and Robin in the best light and everyone else in the worst or most negative light.

Brenda says

2.5★s

When psychologist Alex Delaware saw fifteen year old Lauren Teague on the insistence of her parents, he was frustrated by his inability to help her. Two sessions was all she managed before she stopped coming to his practice. Then, ten years later Lauren's mother had contacted him – she was worried about Lauren; could he help find her as she had gone away without saying anything; without taking anything. She was worried...

When Detective Milo Sturgis contacted Alex to let him know Lauren's body had been found in a nearby dumpster, Alex was noticeably upset. He wasn't sure why; his disappointment in himself at not helping her when she was a teen ate at him – he was determined to find her killer and put her to rest.

The investigation uncovered lies and deception, a depth of complicated tracks from the wealthy to the downright destitute. Alex found himself drawn into the lives of university professors and strippers; night club workers and students. With Milo occasionally by Alex's side, the two of them chased leads; some of which were good, most that were not. Would Lauren's vicious killer be found?

I normally thoroughly enjoy Jonathan Kellerman's Alex Delaware series, but this one was nowhere near his usual high standard. In places it was downright boring I'm afraid – too heavy on the description, not enough action. And with him having seen Lauren twice, years ago then becoming so involved - Alex was out of character and definitely having a bad few weeks in this one.
