



Freezing

Clea Koff

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One of the most exciting crime and mystery series debuts of the year. Think Kathy Reichs and Patricia Cornwell. - When a bundle of frozen body parts tumbles out the rear door of a van on a Los Angeles freeway, FBI agent Scott Houston knows just where to go for an off-the-record analysis: Agency 32/1, a non-profit missing persons identification resource center run by forensic anthropologists Jayne Hall and Steelie Lander. Jayne and Steelie quickly determine that the remains are human, though from several women. But Scott's call has unintended consequences for the two women, putting their lives in jeopardy, as their unique skills uncover evidence leading directly to the killer . . .

Freezing Details

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Author : Clea Koff

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Vicki says

Good holiday read but it followed the over used crime thriller pattern. It was interesting to see the blending of Koff's real life experience with forensic anthropology (see *The Bone Woman: A Forensic Anthropologist's Search for Truth in the Mass Graves of Rwanda, Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo*) with a crime thriller but everything else was the same old serial killer story.

Evelyn says

Forensic anthropologists Steelie and Jayne help the FBI solve the case of body parts found along an LA freeway using their non-profit missing persons agency.

A good debut with accurate details. Author knows her stuff. My biggest gripe is with the typeface Severn House uses that makes it hard to read.

Naomi says

I found this book to be a bit too predictable, a dime a dozen crime books with way too much emphasis on emotions that typically drives me crazy. The story line really had a lot of promise but then fell apart in the writing.

Finally, there was something about the writing that left me feeling it came off as slightly amateurish and not well formed.

Tara says

Super creepy. Great mystery.

Carolyn Roys says

This is a debut by someone who works in the forensic field so the science was excellent. The story of two scientists who have worked in mass grave recovery and who now are heading an agency that helps families of missing persons connect to loved ones who are deceased, is a good one. The mystery takes a turn I should have seen coming and even though you know who the bad guy is halfway through the book, there is a ton more terribleness to follow. I'll be looking for more from this author as she develops the characters. Here's to hoping Jayne and Scott find their way to each other!

Sharon Michael says

This one stands out in a field of multiple forensic scientific police procedurals. It is obvious that the information is accurate and the writing carries the authority of the author who has, indeed, been there and done that.

The characters are well presented and although two of the main characters are dealing with PTSD from their past experiences, they are coping and competent. This, for me, is a refreshing change from the tendency to present 'damaged' characters handicapped by their problems.

Interesting plot with intriguing side-steps along the way and a very sympathetic portrayal of the relatives of the victims. This is very well done and handled with a light, knowledgeable touch.

Some editing issues, which I had no real problem with and a few less than smooth areas of transitions and dialogues, which are often found in a first book. I would expect this to resolve with more books in the series, which I hope we will be seeing soon.

Sheila says

I enjoyed this book but found the abbreviations/acronyms confusing at times. Terms like 'Misper' for Missing Persons were scattered throughout the book. Steelie and Jayne are forensic anthropologists who have formed a charity company focusing on locating the identification of missing persons. A FBI agent, Scott Houston calls them in on a case. He met both women 5 years ago but has been in phone contact with Jayne on a frequent basis. Now, Scott has been transferred to LA with his partner, Eric where Jayne and Steelie now live. A van was rear-ended and frozen body parts escaped out the back door. Jayne and Steelie have been asked to help provide information on the specimens. Scott and Eric have been tracking a serial killer for years when they were located in Georgia but now they believe the body remains are evidence of the same killer. Jayne is experiencing signs and symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from a previous harrowing experience overseas but Scott is as well although he seems to hide it more effectively. As the story evolves, it appears Jayne is becoming more a target of the serial killer as well. Good plot line.

Annthe librarian says

Jayne Hall and Steelie Lander are forensic anthropologists who are called to the side of a LA freeway to assist in a case involving a bag of body parts that has fallen from a vehicle. Lots of twists and turns in this first novel to keep you reading and guessing.

Kb says

Not bad for a first book by a new author. Some of the scenarios were a little bit too contrived -- one in particular involving the location of a hidden code word was clever, though highly unlikely -- but the plot worked well overall, with a good balance of deduction, forensics, and legwork leading to the final solution for the case. Even the romance seemed integrated into the plot, and didn't appear to be sickeningly tacked on.

Huge kudos to this author. I look forward to reading more of the adventures of Jayne and Steelie.

Jane says

While I was reading Koff's debut mystery I watched a crime show on television. The difference between this well-researched forensic mystery and the shoddy science on the show was monumental. So much so that I ranted about it elsewhere. That said, FREEZING is a great start to what I hope will be a long-running series.

Jayne Hall and Steelie Lander run the 32/1 agency, a nonprofit organization that does forensic profiles of missing persons and tries to connect them with the many Jane and John Does who've been left in coroner's offices around the country. They're forensic anthropology expertise is requested by a friend at the FBI when a traffic accident on an LA freeway leads to the discovery of the remnants of a body. Remnants that are actually pieces, two arms and part of a leg to be exact. The agents are convinced that these body parts are connected to a possible serial killer who'd been operating in Georgia and they want Jayne and Steelie to help them prove the connection.

Clea Koff is a herself a forensic anthropologist who runs an agency much like the fictional one she has created for her protagonists. Her expertise is a great asset to the book. Every now and then she does do a little bit of info-dumping, but mostly she lets her characters tell the story. The mystery is one that builds slowly as Jayne and Steelie and their FBI counterparts put the pieces together (ackk, bad pun there). This was definitely a palate cleanser after I got done with the bad tv science.

This review was posted at MADreads:

<http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/m...>

Colleen says

I completely enjoyed this book. Two of the primary characters are people dealing with the post traumatic stress of things they witnessed on UN missions, but their stresses were well handled, woven into the story, and made them richer characters rather than just damaged people. Jayne isn't so crippled by her PTSD that we wonder why she's the main character, and she doesn't find a miracle cure for her trauma, she just lives with it, and does what she has to do. I found this refreshing in its realism. The story itself was detailed and very good. I was thrown for a loop along with the characters when the potential identity of the killer is discovered. I suspected him of being a creep, but that was all (I hope this statement does not constitute too much of a spoiler, since I'm intentionally not naming names). I've recently read reviews of other forensics books proclaiming the lab time and details get in the way of the story, that is not the case here. There was a good balance between important forensic details, police leg work, and thrilling chase. I can't wait for the next one.

Peter says

Very disappointed with this book. It started out reasonably well but ended up being another predictable serial killer story. The dialogue was pretty clunky in places and I found myself not caring whether the two main characters survived or not.

Cedar Sanderson says

Promising book doomed by editing

I wanted to like this book, from the blurb and author bio. Sadly, the story is buried in fluff, like the author was given a word quota and threw in every possible detail to fill it. Also, I was looking forward to a hard science procedural and instead got every romance trope in the book. Perhaps the author is most familiar with reading romances? Anyway, disappointing.

Mike says

I had read and deeply admired Koff's memoir, "The Bone Woman," about her experiences as a forensic anthropologist in Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Rwanda. But I was hesitant to read her first mystery novel, the protagonist of which is a forensic anthropologist back in the States after experiences in Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Rwanda. To my pleasant surprise, Koff knows a lot about the genre, and she tells a fairly breathlessly plotted story with minimal use of jargon. It's not exactly a great book, but I liked the plot twists, good characters, and the authenticity of the setting.

Zora says

Completely unbelievable opening. More research about police procedures would have helped somewhat, but I didn't believe the characters or dialog either.

Renee says

Super good. Check out the author's real-life work in forensic anthropology and identifying missing persons at mpid.org and in her non-fiction book, *The Bone Woman: A Forensic Anthropologist's Search for Truth in the Mass Graves of Rwanda, Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo*. Looking forward to more in this series.

Robin says

This author was compared to Kathy Reichs and Patricia Cornwell so I thought I would give it a chance. Whoever made the comparison wasn't even close. I didn't even bother finishing the book.

Toni says

I really enjoyed reading this debut novel. Looking forward to reading more by Clea Koff.

Linny says

based on real life info on anthropology forensics, pretty good job and integrating this with romance/plot/action - only in places the detail of non-bones scenarios didn't keep pace. The description of a skill is different from attention to detail in scenery or characters, etc. Bones found all over the place - the challenge of piecing together fascinating.

April says

This author is a forensic anthropologist who has worked mass burials with the UN. She founded an agency similar to the fictional one she writes about - to help identify some of the unknowns that are processed by city and county morgues all across the nation.

The story was well-plotted and the characters had depth. The information about the workings of a forensic anthropologist and the effort to identify Jane or John Does was very interesting.
