



## Death du Jour

*Kathy Reichs*

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## **Death du Jour** Kathy Reichs

Assaulted by the bitter cold of a Montreal winter, the American-born Dr. Temperance Breman, Forensic Anthropologist for the Province of Quebec, digs for a corpse where Sister Elisabeth Nicolet, dead over a century and now a candidate for sainthood, should lie in her grave. A strange, small coffin, buried in the recesses of a decaying church, holds the first clue to the cloistered nun's fate. The puzzle surrounding Sister Elisabeth's life and death provides a welcome contrast to discoveries at a burning chalet, where scorched and twisted bodies await Tempe's professional expertise. Who were these people? What brought them to this gruesome fate? Homicide Detective Andrew Ryan, with whom Tempe has a combusive history, joins her in the arson investigation. From the fire scene they are drawn into the worlds of an enigmatic and controversial professor, a mysterious commune, and a primate colony on a Carolina island.

## **Death du Jour Details**

Date : Published May 2006 by Pocket Star (first published 1999)

ISBN : 9780671011376

Author : Kathy Reichs

Format : Paperback 451 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Fiction, Thriller

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# From Reader Review Death du Jour for online ebook

## Kate says

I hate to say that I was disappointed in this book but I really was. I really have loved the other Temperance Brennan books that I've read by Kathy Reichs so I'm hoping the rest of the series is more like the others that I've read. Death du Jour was a predictable slow-burner for me. I also think one of the reasons I wasn't as drawn to it as the others is because it was extremely unrealistic.

I felt like there were 2-3 stories going on in one book and while they all did connect back, they were far fetched and didn't grab my attention. I had a hard time really being pulled into this one the same way that I was pulled into her other ones and I feel like it was because it was slow moving and didn't have the same thrilling characteristics as the other Temperance Brennan books I read.

However, for every negative there is a positive and I did enjoy learning more about the character of Temperance Brennan and her relationship with Andrew Ryan. I definitely plan on reading more in this series and as I said above am hoping that this was just a slow one.

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## Mike says

Brennan runs into religious zealots, tries to identify a nun who may be declared a saint, and helping her sister avoid a cult.

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## Tommy Marx says

Kathy Reichs is a fairly good writer. She does have an obsession with clumsy similes that are often so bad they take me out of the story completely, but that aside, she generally is a good writer. That said, this book annoyed the hell out of me.

My first complaint is that Reichs constantly creates fake mysteries that are only mysterious because she won't state what the characters figure out. At the beginning, Tempe (her main character) discovers something important about a would-be-saint from the 1800s. Throughout the novel we're constantly reminded that there's some major twist regarding the would-be-saint's bones that might cause a problem. And Reichs refuses to reveal that twist until the very end, even though it's inconsequential (it has nothing whatsoever to do with the main story) and feels like a major letdown once she reveals it. That would be bad enough, but she does the shell trick with every single thing that happens in the story. Any details regarding anything that takes place in the story cannot be revealed until Reichs has avoided revealing the details at least 241 times. Honestly, if Tempe ordered lunch from a deli, I would fully expect to find out via a major revelation 200 pages later that a pickle was included in the deal, a pickle that (gasp) she did not ask for.

Reichs doesn't create suspense, she creates annoyances. It's the literary equivalent of the cat jumping out of the shadows in a grade-Z horror movie.

But as annoying as that might be, her biggest flaw is that she loves creating several different storylines and

then revealing that everything is related (and extremely personal), even if the convergence of events makes no sense whatsoever. In her first book, Reichs sacrifices Tempe's best friend (which is a blessing, since the friend is one of the most gratingly awful characters ever created in a work of fiction) in a desperate attempt to make the mystery as personal as possible. In "Du Jour", the role of the lamb goes to Tempe's previously unmentioned sister, who conveniently becomes involved in a series of events spanning from Texas to North Carolina to Canada.

Which is my biggest problem with this book. Tempe is asked to examine the remains of a would-be-saint, then is asked to investigate a torched house where several people (including two infants) were viciously murdered. There's also the body of a woman who was literally fed to the dogs, and when Tempe's on vacation with her niece, the bodies of two other women are found on the remote island she's visiting. Although we don't find out that it's TWO women (instead of a man and a woman) until chapters later, because oh yeah, fake mysteries. The fact that it's two women instead of a man and a woman changes nothing whatsoever, but Reichs idea of suspense is to wait until long after anyone would care to reveal the gender of the second victim.

And oh yeah, every single event is related, from the saint to the tortured babies to the victim of dogs to the remote island corpses. Because that's what passes for logic in this book.

And let's not forget that every fifty pages Tempe is either attacked or has cat bones thrown into her apartment (I kid you not) with the warning that she needs to back away, even though no one ever specifies what exactly she needs to back away from.

This is the second novel I've read by Reichs after reading her debut novel (which was actually worse). And yes, this will be the last novel I'll read by Reichs. She's a fairly good writer as long as you ignore the all-too-frequent flaws. But I'd rather read a book by someone who writes without all the obvious flaws. Thanks anyway.

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## **Hannah Ruthie says**

I've always enjoyed Bones on TV, so picked up a couple of Kathy Reichs books in a charity shop to see how they compare. I believe that this is book two, but having not read the first did not seem to be a problem at all.

I found this a fascinating read. It includes a myriad of detail about science, anthropology and other interesting input. I wouldn't describe her as a particularly descriptive author (ie, flowing poetic language) but the constant gush of minute trivia keeps the reader engrossed. The reading is easy, with short sentences and a tight storyline. I could imagine the screen character reading the words, but the book is far more intricate, and in the long-run I would probably prefer the book to the TV adaptation. Occasionally the details got a little too intense, and I'd find my eyes glossing over and having to re-read a page.

I read it in one go, which is always a positive for the book! The plot is far-fetched, but only in the way that most crime/detective fiction is full of incredible co-incidences. It was described as a chiller, but I didn't find it particularly scary or overly tense myself (good, as I'm a wimp!) There are a number of disturbing moments when considering the deaths, particularly of children, which I never like but are integral to the book. Parts of the ending were predictable, but other parts definitely weren't: it is well-worth an evening's read.

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## Thomas Strömquist says

This is a series that I won't be pursuing. Almost 20 % into the book and it reads a little like a Standard Operating Procedure for lab work. If you've done any such, save yourself the boredom. The only other mentions is hinting of the title character's all good traits; she's hard-working, honest, virtuous, beautiful, slim, nice, did I mention beautiful?. And she handles pipettes and forensic tools with the same determination and purpose as she prepares her meals and...

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## Fen says

What a disappointment. The first book wasn't fantastic, by any stretch, but it was so much better than this. I guessed every single plot point along the way, except for the ones where information was deliberately kept from the reader. Which brings me to one of my major complaints about this book... it used a lazy writer trick that happens to be a big pet peeve of mine: the character knows information but doesn't share it with the reader. It's something that a writer can sort of get away with if the story is written in third person, but you've got a first person narrative, it's just plain bad writing to say "I looked at the back of the skull and came to a startling realization that changed everything. Minor Character Standing Nearby looked over my shoulder, saw the same thing and let out a loud exclamation." And then wait until the end of the book to clue the reader in on what they saw. It's frustrating and it cheapens the story.

If this had been the first book of the series, I never would have bothered finding the second one. As it was, I had to struggle to finish reading it. In short, the book left me annoyed, somewhat bored and just interested enough it how it was all going to finally be "revealed" that I read to the end.

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## David says

Pop quiz! This book is about:

- A. The exhumation of a French nun;
- B. Murders that were followed by arson;
- C. The disappearance of a college student;
- D. The disappearance of the sister of the protagonist;
- E. Drug-related murders on an island sanctuary;
- F. A sinister cult;
- G. It's not about anything. It is just a device for Kathy Reichs to insert her research on entomology, forensic science and cults;
- H. All of the above.

If you chose (H) you pass!

I am not through with this book, and surprisingly, I am enjoying it somewhat. However, even people who enjoy the book would have to acknowledge it is a complete mess.

Deja Dead, the first book in the series, was a pretty good plot buried beneath a lot of inane prose:  
<http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

Death Du Jour looks like it had an editor, it is shorter, and had the potential for a good plot. However, Reichs had about five too many components, and most of the sub-plots are tacked on to the main plot in a completely unbelievable way. Tempe meets a college student -- voila! She is involved. Tempe goes to an island - voila! Bodies. Tempe's sister comes to visit - voila! She is involved. Her sister's name is Gabby....whoops, that was Tempe's friend in Deja Dead who disappeared. This is her sister, Hari, who disappears. Sound familiar? This is only Kathy Reichs' second book and she is already re-hashing. But the main problem is that the number of coincidences involve strain credulity beyond the breaking point. She should have picked the house burning plot and stuck with that.

In addition, there are two "characters" who are really just mouthpieces for research about cults and forensics. They talk with Tempe and launch into lectures on their subject. Personally, I was interested in the material, but in terms of art, the research material is handled in a very ham-handed way.

What works? Reichs has a nice writing style, and she develops the relationship with Detective Ryan further from Deja Dead. I am not burdened by having watched "Bones" so I didn't have expectations. I thought that she handled their relationship nicely. I liked the science and the experience that Reichs conveys on what it is like to be an active forensic anthropologist.

At this point I have 3 discs to go on the audiobook and plan to finish. But regardless of how it all ends up there are waaaaaay too many different plot lines to make the novel work. Like an episode of "Murder She Wrote", wherever Tempe goes, the bodies just pile up for her to investigate. Or, a close friend disappears. No one reads fiction for absolute rock-solidly realistic stories. But a little contact with reality would have simplified and helped this book a lot.

Update: the result of the convoluted structure of the book, and having too many characters was predictable: when the culprit was revealed I didn't really care. Also, the "nun" thread turned out to be pretty lame for this day and age.

In this book, Reichs has solved some of her problems, namely over-writing. Or, she at least has found an editor with some backbone. The plot here was not a bad idea, but even Tempe acknowledges that there are a number of coincidences in three locations. It strains even the willing suspension of disbelief. Still, I found the research portions interesting, despite the clumsy insertion into the narrative. Also, the developing relationship between Tempe and Ryan is something to watch. In book no. 2 of this series Kathy Reichs is getting there, but hasn't quite arrived.

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## Carol says

*"How does one explain madness?"*

This one quote alone explains a bit of my quest to read Temperance Brennan Novels. I picked up *Death Du Jour*, the second in the series as sometime long ago I read the first, *Deja Dead*. I don't quite remember the whole of that story but knew that I wanted to delve more into the life of fictional forensic anthropologist Tempe.

I was excited in 2005 when Fox aired the pilot of *Bones*. The initial programs based loosely on the real life of Kathy Reichs, just whetted my appetite to read the books one day. Like most TV programs this one started out with a bang and is trickling to an end for me in its ninth season. It's hard to keep up the momentum in a long running series so I'm keeping my fingers crossed that the books won't fizzle out too.

What appealed to me in *Death Du Jour* is the accuracy of the forensics, the attention to detail, and though some would not agree, the plausibility of plot. Reichs is setting up her character, giving us bits and pieces of what makes Tempe tick, balancing a woman who sees the worst life can bring yet hasn't lost her belief in the goodness of man. There's an ex-husband, a beloved cat, a daughter and someone I didn't realize existed, her sister Harry. Brennan describes Harry as *"unbearably annoying, and totally enduring, my sister offsets with pure energy what she lacks in training or focus. I find her thoroughly exhausting."* It is passages like these that Reichs uses to lighten the seriousness and gruesomeness of the work Brennan does and allows us to see her humorous side. Brennan divides her work life between North Carolina and Quebec doing some crime scene inspection in both locales. This division of locale gives the character a literal change of scenery.

*Death Du Jour* finds Brennan in Montreal, unearthing the remains of Sister Elizabeth Nicolet, who may or may not become a saint. In addition, a horrific fire with several charred bodies and the arrival of her sister will keep Brennan more than busy this time out. There's more, lots more but you get the picture. It's a mystery and a darn good one at that.

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## Jasbr says

Die Serie "Bones - Die Knochenjägerin" schaue ich mir wirklich gern an, vor allem weil die Hauptfigur Temperance Brennan mit ihren analytischen Art sehr sympathisch finde. Ich wusste zwar, dass die Serie auf Büchern basiert, hatte aber noch keins gelesen - bis jetzt.

Ich wurde nich enttäuscht: Gerade die Protagonistin ist einfach genial: Sehr intelligent, sie analysiert alles und jeden und hat sehr viel Mut. Ich hatte Spaß daran, ihr und ihren Ermittlungen zu folgen.

Etwas verwirrend fand ich die vielen Handlungsstränge: Während Temperance am Anfang einfach nur die Knochen einer lang verstorbenen Nonne untersuchen soll, häufen sich auf einmal die Leichen. Dadurch, dass sie mal in Kanada, mal in den USA auftauchen, musste ich mich anstrengen, die einzelnen Schauplätze mitzuverfolgen. Hier wäre für meinen Geschmack weniger mehr gewesen, auch wenn am Ende alles gut zusammengepasst hat.

Gut gefallen hat mir die sehr persönliche Note, die der Fall hat. Man lernt so nicht nur etwas die Familie der Protagonistin kennen, sondern auch eine sehr weiche und gefühlvolle Seite an ihr. Das war ein schöner Kontrast zu ihrer "normalen" Arbeit.

Spannung war weitgehend enthalten, allerdings gab es auch lange Passagen mit Erklärungen zur eigentlichen Arbeit der Anthropologin, das nahm der Geschichte dann manchmal etwas die Spannung. Allerdings ist das ein Aspekt, den ich von anderen Thrillern nicht kannte, deswegen ist das für mich kein Minuspunkt.

Insgesamt wurde ich sehr gut unterhalten, Abzüge gibt es nur für die vielen Schauplätze, deshalb 4 Sterne.

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## **Heather says**

\*\*\*SPOILER ALERT\*\*\*

This author annoys me. This story was WAY too similar to the first book. Best friend missing to sister missing...intruder in house? oh, just a cat on fire...and all that crap about some buzzing in her memory cells all the time! I also get tired of all the metaphors, but that was better in this book at least. So far I just find the writing amateurish and it feels like she's trying too hard.

I also HATED the ending. We did not get to see any of the links unfold, she just summed it up for the reader through conversations in the last chapter, and one conversation didn't even make sense! Waaaaaaay too easy. After reading the entire book I totally felt GYPPE that I was left out of the 'solving' part of the book.

I think that one reason this author, or this series, annoys me so much is because I watch the series 'Bones' and LOVE IT! The series is LOOSELY based on these books, at least as far as I've read in the series I don't see that many similarities, especially in Brennan. Personality is just off and I have a hard time with that, since I'm an avid watcher of the tv show. And finally, do all these murder mystery 'solvers' have to be recovering alcoholics? That just irritates me too!

Overall I liked the story, and there are some positives to her writing, but the ending really ruined this book for me. I'll try another, my fingers stay crossed that it will get better.

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## **Catten says**

I hate it when someone ruins a movie or a book for me... especially a book, because that's a bigger investment of time and imagination. So I'll tell you a little about Kathy Reichs's *Death Du Jour*, but I won't ruin it for you.

First, you need to know that this is her second book. *Deja Dead* from 1997 was a great ride, taking the reader into the world of anthropological forensics and shining a bright light on a murder investigation from a new point of view.

Tempe Brennan is the main character in both books and she mirrors Reichs's own life in a way: Both shuttle between the US and Canada working as forensic anthropologists. The intrigue of a new angle, excellent writing, and a series of distinct voices of the characters make this a tough book to put down.

Reichs takes Tempe into the jaw-clenching cold of a Montreal winter to dig up the bones of a nun. You want to wrap your blanket a little tighter, because the descriptions of the climate and the delicate work of digging for graves is precise and puts the reader right there.

Soon, she's off to a burnt-up house to sort out the remains of the inhabitants. The descriptions are both gruesome and fascinating. She describes the process of putting the pieces together and is just clinical enough for you to feel that you've stepped away from the horror, yet you still have the sense of loss. I look at it as a



good way to learn about things second-hand. Reichs is, after all, an expert and a responsible writer.

Tempe's commitments, both personal and professional, keep piling up yet she keeps her sharp sense of humor. This is why I like the character so much. She overextends herself, and then things just keep happening to add to her already full plate. She keeps going while she loses sleep over the nine thousand things going on in her life. She mentions a dream where she has to take an exam but never attended the class. I have that dream. This woman is my personal hero.

She encounters a cult and its odd members, debates with herself about the merits of having or not having a relationship with a homicide detective, and uncovers links between seemingly unrelated events. She even gets a crash course in primate behavior and the nature of insects acting on corpses.

Reichs is very talented. She offers up a great plot and believable characters. The writing is clean and entertaining. Think Patricia Cornwell without the know-it-allness. I mentioned in a previous review that my friend the Lieutenant dislikes Cornwell for that reason. Well, I think he'll dig this book.

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## Lightreads says

Meh. I am once again taken in by the mistaken belief that surely books this popular and well discussed must have something to them, right? People do have a modicum of taste and literary judgment, yes?

Apparently, people have a taste for plots which are entirely held together by a soupy glue of wild coincidence and random chance. A lot of criminal activities and organizations have specific ties to both Charlotte and Quebec, you know. Oh, and it is very common for the various family members and loved ones of an investigator to randomly go wandering into the line of fire in a case. Happens to me all the time. People also apparently like cardboard angst and a wooden romance – the entire scene preceding the first hook-up of our main couple is summarized in a paragraph, with such deathless prose as, “and Ryan disclosed his feelings about [fill in random life event of note].” Oi.

In comparison to the painfully abbreviated attempts at character and the flailings of the plot, Reichs devotes swaths of the text to explanations of things like spatter pattern analysis in physical assaults. Which I personally find fascinating, but all things told I'd take a textbook over this any day. Far less irritating.

Some of my wrath is disappointment – I'm fond of Bones, the spin-off TV show. It also features Temperance Brennan, forensic anthropologist, but her location, friends, coworkers, and story are entirely different. The dialogue is snappy, the secondary characters charming, the potential relationship actually touching, oh and David Boreanaz is a goofy but talented FBI agent. Good times all around.

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## Pamela says

"??? ?????? ?????? ?????? ??? ???????? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ??????"

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## **Susen liest says**

Für mich ein Re-Read, da ich es vor etwa 15 Jahren schon mal gelesen hatte. Es handelt sich um den zweiten Band der Reihe um die Anthropologin Tempe Brennan, die vor einigen Jahren mehr Bekanntheit durch die Serie "Bones" erhielt - auch wenn es bis auf den Namen und den Beruf keinerlei Übereinstimmungen mit der Buchvorlage gibt. Tempe ist Anthropologie-Dozentin in North Carolina und hilft in den Semesterpausen als forensische Anthropologin in Montreal aus. Dieser Band spielt an beiden Orten und bietet somit ganz schön viele spannende Fälle, die es zu bearbeiten gilt. Das Hauptthema um die Sekte war nicht so meins, aber ich liebe den Schreibstil von Kathy Reichs und hab auch gleich wieder Lust auf den nächsten Band!

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## **Wendi says**

I started watching the TV show "Bones" (on Fox) last season, but I had known that the show was based on Kathy Reichs character Temperance Brennan. That's about all the similarities that there are between the TV show and the book. You could stretch and say that Quebec Detective Ryan is Seely Booth, but that's reeealllyyy reaching it.

I like a good mystery, detective novel, and this book does not fail me! Not only is there a nice chunk of CSI thrown in there is also one of my favorite topics, cults.

So we've got murder to be investigated, suspects to interview and cults to figure out. LOVE IT! I zipped through this book pretty quickly. Reichs is a fine writer, and the character of Dr. Brennan is a little more socially adept than the TV version.

If you like the show, you'll most likely like the book too just as long as you realize that there is absolutely nothing in the book that lends itself to the TV show.

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## **Bettie? says**

Warning for Wanda: includes grisly baby killings.

3\* Déjà Dead (Temperance Brennan #1) 1997

CR Death du Jour (1999)

3\* Deadly Decisions (2000)

3\* Monday Mourning (2004)

4\* Break No Bones (2006)

3\* 206 Bones (2009)

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## Kasia says

The second book in the series was wonderful, somehow it was even better than the first which I found to be a bit long and overly wordy ( yet enjoyable never the less) this left me hungry for more, what better in a continuing story line than a hook line and sinker type of feeling, reading "Death du Jour" made me crave the next book right away. I almost never read a series one after another, I give myself a break because it's always better to crave the next than get stuck in a similar story and feel like I'm reading an eight hundred page book. That said I can't recommend Kathy Reichs enough, she knows what she's talking about and she engages the reader rather than making me feel like I'm standing on the site and observing, I couldn't wait for a free moment to sit and read, on the train, during lunch, before bed, you get the gist...

Its winter time and Temperance finds herself working on a misplaced nun coffin, along the way she gets called to examine the victims of a fire, this of course is no ordinary accident, what fire victims after all have execution style bullet wounds in their head? Clues from her work place and a nearby university reveal that something foul is going on, as usual Tempe gets mixed up into a situation that puts her life in danger, her character is so well written that the reader feels her victories and her falls with great flair. I loved solving the mystery alongside of her, tracking strange disappearances and wondering what happened to the mutilated bodies, traveling and picking up clues and forming opinions of a bunch of zany characters, for those who love gristly deaths, mystery, clues, realistic characters and engaging dialogue this is a real treasure, I hope this series has thirty books in it by the time she's done because deep down I want to read them all. I liked the realistic element of danger, in the previous book her close friend meets with a deadly end so you never know when someone is going to exit the story, it keeps you on your toes! I also enjoyed the bit of romance developing, it made things a bit more interesting, and trust me, it's not nauseating, it adds to the depth of the book. This was another nice read from Reichs and I can't wait to dig right back in.

- Kasia S.

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## bella ? [ bella farren ] says

3.5 / 5 stars

rtc

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## Miriam says

Death is on the menu today at your international chain ~~restaurant~~ murder cult. Luckily for crime prevention, you coincidentally happen to live part time in all the locations that possess these sanguine establishments. And because you work a bizillion hours a week you go out to eat a lot.

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## Robert Beveridge says

Kathy Reichs, *Death du Jour* (Arrow, 1999)

*Death du Jour* is the first book I've read in 2003 that made me want to not put it down until I had turned the final page. It's well over twice as long as most of the novels I've read over the course of this year, and yet it took me less time than many of them to get through. It does have its problems, but readability is certainly not one of them.

Temperance Brennan, a forensic anthropologist who divides her time between North Carolina and Quebec, is in the latter province as the story opens, sifting through the supposed grave of a nun who is being proposed for beatification. Things don't go as planned. Not long after she gets home, she's called to the scene of a devastating house fire to check out a few more bodies. Things don't go as planned. She gets caught up in the twin mysteries of the nun and the house fire, and off we go.

The best thing about the book is its compelling readability. Reichs makes her work unputdownable through throwing clues, monkeywrenches, and events at the reader nonstop from the first chapter till the last. There's never a let-up, no pause for breathing. And this in a novel that tops four hundred pages; it's like making an Arnold Schwarzenegger action flick that runs six hours. Few people are going to try, fewer still will succeed. Reichs manages it well here.

The bad thing about the book, and yes, there is one, is its predictability. There are many points in the book where something happens and it's obvious to the reader how the event connects into the whole puzzle, even while it escapes the police, the main character, and everyone else in the novel. When it comes right down to it, the mystery isn't really much of a mystery; it's more a police procedural than anything else. Or it would be if it weren't trying so hard to be a mystery.

Still, that's not a reason to dismiss a book that hooks a reader this quickly and this decisively. *Death du Jour* is the perfect way to kill a weekend, a fast-paced, easy read that will make the hours fly by as you wander through the world of Tempe Brennan. \*\*\*\*

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