



Chain of Evidence

Ridley Pearson

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Can Detective Joe "Dart" Dartelli uncover the truth? Or, more importantly, *does he dare?* Detective Joe "Dart" Dartelli made one critical mistake in his police career: He chose to ignore a piece of evidence in a case labeled a suicide that might have been a murder. The dead man was himself a vicious woman-killer who more than deserved his fate, but that ignored evidence pointed to Dart's former mentor, the brilliant forensic specialist Walter Zeller. Now another suicide victim turns up--the body of a wife-beater--and the evidence clearly shows that the death was self-inflicted . . . or does it? Zeller was the best at reading and understanding the forensics of a crime scene--could he have manipulated it? Worse, why has Zeller disappeared? It terrifies Dart to suspect that Zeller is in fact on some twisted vigilante crusade, but Dart also knows that if he's right, only he can stop it. *Chain of Evidence* is the intense, heart-pounding story of student versus mentor in the playing field of forensic investigation. Ridley Pearson links computer technology, psychological intensity, and complex questions of police and human ethics to create this breathlessly paced, unputdownable thriller.

Chain of Evidence Details

Date : Published February 1st 1997 by Hachette Books (first published October 12th 1995)

ISBN : 9780786889082

Author : Ridley Pearson

Format : Paperback 512 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Crime, Suspense, Detective, Mystery Thriller

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Ginny says

Yes, a book that takes place in Hartford Connecticut of all places!! I happened to pick this up browsing through the stacks at the library. I was my introduction to Ridley Pearson, and though I enjoy his Lou Boldt novels, I wish he would return to Connecticut.

Jeff Dickison says

A fair to middling book that could have been a lot better. The beginning was often quite confusing because the author did a poor job of setting the book up. Once you got past the weak setup the book became much better.

Joan says

A great thriller and very realistic even though it was written several years ago. The detail and research is excellent.

Teresa Kendall says

I listened to this gritty detective story on audio. The narrator had perfect northeastern accent for the main character. While I did enjoy the story, characters, and suspense, I had a little trouble following events at times. Several of the characters were similar, so part of the storyline remains fuzzy to me. I still enjoyed it, however, and would read more crime drama from this author.

Kristin says

This was a decent book, but I felt like I was missing something, like there was an earlier book that introduced these characters and their backstories. The focus here is on Joe Dartelli, a detective who finds an odd pattern to suicides being investigated by his department, particularly ones where a fellow detective is lead. The work ethic of this detective, Kowalski, is widely known among his colleagues to be less than stellar and Dartelli wonders if Kowalski's apathy is causing key clues to be missed. At the same time, Dartelli is reminded of a case from his past in which he ignored a crucial piece of evidence in order to protect his mentor, Zeller, who retired suddenly soon after that case was closed. Being only one of two people who knows about the evidence, Dartelli may be the lone person left in the department who can link this case to the new ones, but he may find that leaving the cases to be closed as simple suicides is easier for everyone involved.

Even though Pearson gradually provided the information about Zeller and Dartelli that was needed to form the plot of this book, I imagine it could have been a book all its own, albeit one that this story completely

spoils. It doesn't go along with any of the other books I've read, so if there are multiple books, it would be a completely new series. All told, while the story had me hooked, it wasn't one of my favorites by Pearson, as the ending was action-packed yet anticlimactic at the same time. Some of the minor characters who played a role in the ending, I also felt needed more of their backstory told in order to understand how and why they do what they do and interact with others in certain ways. Therefore, if this indeed is part of a series, I'd recommend reading the earlier ones first.

Evelyn says

Lt. Joe "Dart" Dartelli investigates the suicides of several prominent local criminals and comes to the conclusion that they are actually murders. The only problem is that his prime suspect is his partner and mentor.

A great story with a tight plot and fast pacing. Read this when it first came out in 1995 but enjoyed it again.

Lori Johnson says

This book was pure Ridley Pearson! Like his other books, (I have read maybe 12,) he builds his characters so you think you really know them, builds the story so you think you know where it is going and then WHAMMO! He takes you on a long suspenseful ride and you aren't really sure where it is going. The suspense is like a leaky faucet. Drip. Drip. Drip. It seems to go on forever and you can't turn the pages fast enough! Sometimes I literally have to remind myself to breathe!! I LOVE this author! This particular book had language that was WAY over the top and some pretty graphic sex, which I haven't found typical of Pearson's style. Still, the book was quite a ride and I recommend this book as I do ALL of Ridley Pearson's books.

Elizabeth says

I really don't know what to say about this book. It wasn't exactly BAD, but it wasn't very good either. The story was pretty interesting, I guess. I was just BORED. Maybe it was the length of it. Maybe it was the fact that I knew what was going on the whole time. I just know I flew through the last 30 pages just so I could finally be done.

Some of my friends have rated his books really high, so I will give Pearson another try in the future. Perhaps this just wasn't the right one for me.

Pam says

I read this book because I had read something from most of the other members of the Rock Bottom Remainers and thought I was being prejudicial to Ridley Pearson. Then I read it and remembered I'm really not much of a mystery fan. Not that this was a mystery. The writing was fine. But the story and characters never became something that I cared about.

I admit that having that helix on the cover and then having virtually nothing to do with DNA was a bit of a bummer. I was hoping for some good science - but if you don't count the morphing program - science was pretty sparse.

I will be more careful when reading books due to who the author plays music with....

Maya says

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Marilyn says

This is the second book by Ridley Pearson that I have read. I did like it as well as the first. It dragged in spots. I intend to go back and read more in the series he has written.

Looking at his body of work there are lots of other choices.

Edward Pissmeoff says

This was an ok book. A basic crime drama with a few cool twists and what not. what really got me, though, was the fact that its based in Hartford, CT. I live in CT and know the city well. All the streets in the book are real, and according to Pearson, very VERY dangerous. But....its not as bad as he makes it out to be. Either he has never been to Hartford, or hes just going off of rumors and stereotypes. Either way, the picture of The Beat he paints is overly exaggerated. Over all, this was an alright mystery. Good for a quick weekend read.

aPriL does feral sometimes says

Omg, this is a ridiculously awful written book. Emotionally tone deaf beyond belief, three sentences written when one would do. Pearson can write action scenes and knows his technology - his strengths as an author. I've finished reading six of his books, and while I've rated them from four stars to one, they ALL have terrible emotional tone-deafness despite the presence of constant, over-the-top soap opera emo, and half of them include sentences similar to: 'I went to the store. I stopped at the store to shop. The store was the place I shopped at.' The hot women all have high big breasts. Word usages are often truly odd; i.e. "She leaned back

and caught eyes with him." page 229. This police detective mystery has all of that going on. I couldn't finish it. His spy thrillers, for some reason, are better written, even though they also have the same problems.

I guess if bad writing isn't a problem for you, it's ok otherwise. A waiting-for-a-bus book, if it doesn't make you titter like a crazy person and cause people to edge away. O_o

Anke says

Een leuk boek, een goed opgebouwd verhaal.

Zade says

Ridley Pearson has a reputation as a thinking reader's author for good reason. He does an incredible amount of research for his books, making technical detail key to his plots. Even as technology changes, his writing is strong enough that his books hold up well over time and rarely feel anachronistic. *Chain of Evidence*, for example, although about 20 years old, makes it easy for the reader to feel like it takes place today. The problem at the heart of the plot still exists and the technology that makes the climactic scene work still rings true.

For readers new to Pearson's work, this is not the book with which to start. It's a solid effort and quite readable, but it does not showcase Pearson's true abilities. Despite a complex and likeable protagonist and a hot-button social topic, it's hard to invest emotionally in the story. It's a tribute to Pearson's skill that I found myself leaning towards sympathy for the apparent bad guy even before I had a justifiable reason to do so, but even as I knew all the reasons I should feel for Dart, the protagonist, I was never able to overcome a sense of detachment from him. Looking back, I can identify two reasons for this distance:

1. Pearson jumps over weeks at a time in his narrative. While this may be accurate to police work, in which nothing may happen on a case and other cases demand attention, the complete disappearance of those days in the protagonist's life draws the reader's attention to the fact that this is fiction. For comparison, look at John Sandford's work, in which the reader may learn more than he ever wanted to know about muskie fishing, but at the same time, is never ejected from the protagonist's life for more than a few hours, which is a much easier gap to span. By omitting most of the mundane parts of Dart's life, Pearson makes him less of a person.
2. Pearson's protagonist makes decisions, including the most important one in the novel, for which the reader cannot understand the rationale. While readers can sometimes pass off unclear motivations as simply cases of "it's not what I'd do, but people are different," in this case, there is absolutely no conceivable reason why Dart would go where he goes, when he goes, in the manner he goes.

Chain of Evidence is certainly worth the time to read, but don't judge the author by this book alone. He's written far better. Just the same, *Chain of Evidence* is still better than a lot of the crime fiction out there. It will make you think and it will certainly entertain.
