



Monster (An Alex Delaware Novel)

By Jonathan Kellerman

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A second-rate actor is found mutilated in a car trunk. Then a psychologist at a Los Angeles hospital for the criminally insane is murdered in a similar grisly fashion. Suddenly the incoherent ramblings of an inmate at the presumably secure institution begin to make chilling sense—they are, in fact, horrifying predictions. Yet how can a barely functional psychotic locked behind asylum walls possibly know such vivid details of crimes committed in the outside world? Drawn into a labyrinth of secrets, revenge, sex, and manipulation, Dr. Alex Delaware and Detective Milo Sturgis set out to unlock this enigma and put an end to the brutal killings—before the madman predicts their own demise. . . .

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Consulting psychologist Alex Delaware has a novel approach to crime-solving: he uses his training to unlock the secrets in the minds of the victims and jiggles the clues he finds there until the right scenario emerges. So when Alex's LAPD buddy Milo finds the hacked-up body of a woman psychologist named Claire Argent in an abandoned car trunk--the second such murder in eight months--Alex heads for her place of employment: the Starkweather State Hospital for the Criminally Insane.

One of Argent's patients at Starkweather is Ardis "Monster" Peake, imprisoned for the unbelievably brutal murders of his mother and the family she worked for, including a small child and a baby. There's at least one eerie similarity between the mutilation of their bodies and Argent's: in all the bodies, the eyes were taken or destroyed. But Peake, diagnosed as schizophrenic and psychotic, is a well-behaved vegetable due to a steady diet of Thorazine, and he hasn't left the hospital since his incarceration 15 years before. How is it, then, that Claire Argent's assistant, Heidi Ott, swears she heard Peake say, "Dr. A. Bad eyes in a box" soon after he hears only the bare fact of her death? And why does Alex find Peake so empathetic, in spite of his violent past and chillingly vacant mind? When other mutilated bodies turn up, Alex and Milo begin to suspect that the real monster is very much at large. Like Kellerman's 12 previous Alex Delaware mysteries, *Monster* builds to a big, teeth-clenching bang and ends with some very satisfying surprises. --*Barrie Trinkle*

From Publishers Weekly

In top form in his latest mystery featuring L.A. forensic psychologist Alex Delaware (who had a bit part in the author's previous novel, *Billy Straight*), Kellerman devises a deviously twisted, contemporary tale that draws pulsing suspense from the ageless relationship between madness and evil. Delaware teams up with his pal Milo Sturgis, of LAPD Homicide, to track the murderer of Claire Argent, a young doctor who worked at Starkweather Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Argent's badly mutilated body connects her death to the unsolved murder of a young, aspiring actor whose body had been sawed in half. Kellerman masterfully strews the trail of the investigation with crumbs, challenging his heroes (and readers) to distinguish promising clues from red herrings. Argent, who recently left a prime research job to work at Starkweather, led an extremely isolated life that had nothing in common with that of the murdered actor. The Starkweather staff is reticent and unhelpful until a young aide reveals that the doctor had been spending time with an inmate known as the Monster, a mentally deficient man who had been convicted of murdering and mutilating a young family 15 years earlier. Kellerman focuses on Delaware and Sturgis as they probe the hospital's milieu, the Monster's crime, the doctor's troubled and puzzling history and additional murders. A tense climax in the hills above L.A. brings together all the tautly woven threads as Kellerman delivers another chilling look into the dark corners of the human psyche. Literary Guild, Doubleday Book Club and Mystery Guild main selections.

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From Library Journal

A handsome young actor is found murdered and mutilated, a female psychologist meets a similar fate, and twin brothers are gruesomely dispatchedAall in separate events, on the same evening. The murders, though different, seem to be the work of the same killer. As Dr. Alex Delaware, psychologist and consultant to the LAPD, and detective Milo Sturgis unravel the mystery of the killer's identity, it becomes clear that Ardis Peake (a.k.a. "Monster"), incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital for the criminally insane for the past 16 years, is somehow involved. Kellerman's 13th novel featuring Alex Delaware includes intelligent, well-drawn characters and the kinds of plot twists that make the best mysteries fun to read. Both fans of the series and

readers not familiar with Kellerman's works should enjoy this novel. Recommended for all public libraries.

-ALeslie Madden, Georgia Inst. of Technology Lib. & Information Ctr., Atlanta

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Coffman:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each book has different aim or goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people sense enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They are reading whatever they take because their hobby is definitely reading a book. How about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book when they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you should have this Monster (An Alex Delaware Novel).

James Shafer:

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