



Trace Evidence

Elizabeth Becka , Lisa Black

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A gripping suspense novel that introduces forensic expert Evelyn James as she tries to decipher trace evidence and solve a bizarre crime. It's a cold Cleveland November day when forensic trace evidence expert Evelyn James is summoned to the scene of a bizarre crime. A young woman has been forcibly drowned, her feet chained and sunk in cement. When a second young victim is connected to a prominent family, all hell breaks loose, and the police--and Evelyn--are up against it to find the murderer. Evelyn just wants to get the job done, but is pulled into a web of conflicting loyalties, unexpected relationships, and professional betrayal. When Evelyn suspects that her own teenage daughter has become a pawn in the killer's plans, she must remain true to herself and her skills and follow the evidence to the murderer's door.

Trace Evidence Details

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Author : Elizabeth Becka , Lisa Black

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From Reader Review Trace Evidence for online ebook

Roger says

Good detective story, well crafted, characters a bit overwhelming and an unlikely premise.

Jennifer Wardrip says

In the style of Patricia Cornwell (a real life former Medical Examiner), Keith Ablow (a forensic psychologist), and Kathy Reichs (a forensic anthropologist), new author Elizabeth Becka draws on her life as a forensic specialist to pen a wonderful thriller/forensic procedural!

Evelyn James is a forensic scientist in Cleveland 's Medical Examiner's office. On a cold November day, she's called to the scene of a chilling crime--a young woman has been pulled from the river, arms and body encased in chains, her feet ensconced in a bucket of cement. Literally drowned to death, the mystery woman preys on Evelyn's mind--especially when another young woman is found dead a few days later. What's even worse is that the second dead girl is Destiny Pierson, daughter of Cleveland 's Mayor. Added to the complications is the fact that Evelyn and Darryl, the Mayor, were once college sweethearts over a decade ago, and Darryl hopes to use that connection to get inside information on the case.

As Evelyn works with grizzled Homicide Detective Riley and newcomer Detective David, they find more missing persons cases that seem similar to the two latest deaths--and find a suspect who seems to fit the profile of their killer. Unfortunately, the suspect has knowledge of Evelyn and her daughter, Angel, leading them to the fact that sixteen-year-old Angel might be another intended victim.

Forensic science mixes with police procedure in Elizabeth Becka's debut novel, and the result is a great read that will keep you turning pages late into the night. As you gain details of Evelyn's personal life, insights into the new Homicide Detective, and background on the serial killer preying on Cleveland 's young women, you'll be enthralled with the perfect mix of truth and fiction.

I can only hope that Ms. Becka plans to return to Cleveland and Evelyn James, a forensic scientist that could well become another Kay Scarpetta, Frank Clevenger, or Temperance Brennan.

Evelyn says

When forensic trace evidence expert Evelyn James is summoned to the scene of a bizarre crime, she finds that a young woman from a prominent Cleveland family has been forcibly drowned in the Cuyahoga River.

Chris says

From another reviewer.

In the style of Patricia Cornwell (a real life former Medical Examiner), Keith Ablow (a forensic psychologist), and Kathy Reichs (a forensic anthropologist), new author Elizabeth Becka draws on her life as a forensic specialist to pen a wonderful thriller/forensic procedural!

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***The first few pages of the book draw you in by introducing the reader to a young woman struggling to escape and alllllmost succeeding. It is a heartrending intro to a great crime novel.

Evelyn James has a teen daughter, a burgeoning relationship, and a gruesome job right out of a horror tale...but at least the dead don't talk back. When she learns that the girl whose death she is investigating was the daughter of a former love, it becomes more personal...and more frightening when her daughter gets drawn in.

Working class Cleveland lends its character to the story and gives this taut tale of murder a gritty authenticty.

Also read her Theresa MacLean forensic thrillers written under the name Lisa Black starting with Takeover.*****

K. says

The supporting characters of Mayor Pierson and his mobster friend Ashworth were far more interesting than the protagonists *or* the mystery. I want to know about their friendship.

The portions of the novel where Evelyn was in the lab alternating between analyzing data and making investigative leaps were too few compared to her mental complaints about her ex-husband and his new wife. Don't get me wrong, character background is extremely important in crime novels to assess motivations, but this just wasn't an effective way to go about it.

(Also? Grumpy, sullen teenagers are so boring to read about.)

The attempt at romance between Evie and the new homicide detective was badly done. There was a resolute lack of chemistry between them for all the emotions the author was telling me they were feeling after only a few days. The epilogue ((view spoiler)) really only does more awkward damage.

Plum-crazy says

Reasonable forensic thriller, which while I did enjoy it, didn't quite grip me as much as I was hoping it would. Evelyn James, the forensic scientist that the book features, is an engaging enough character & I would expect to see her...probably along with David Milaski...appearing in further books.

Wisteriouswoman says

I have to say that I forgot if I even read this book when I went through my pile of books to take back to the library.

The story kept me interested and I always like having a female protagonist that is an expert in her field. The disposal of the bodies in the river using 'cement shoes' made the story a bit different and caught my imagination as well.

I really didn't like the romance aspects of the story. Her relationship with the mayor or her relation with the detective or the relation between her ex and his new wife. They just weren't believably done. I hate it when mysteries turn into romances. She needed a big strong man to save her, please. I wanted her to be clever enough to save herself like one of the other victims did.

The background of the friendship between the mayor and the gangster wasn't totally explained. It would have been interesting to know more about their daughters as well the protagonist's daughter. She seemed very one dimensional.

I couldn't understand why the main character was so worried about her daughter considering she worked all the time and wasn't intensely into mothering in the first place.

Even though it seemed like it might turn into a series I don't think I want to read any more about Evelyn James.

Lee Ann says

The first few pages of the book draw you in by introducing the reader to a young woman struggling to escape and almost succeeding. It is a heartrending intro to a great crime novel.

Evelyn James has a teen daughter, a burgeoning relationship, and a gruesome job right out of a horror tale...but at least the dead don't talk back. When she learns that the girl whose death she is investigating was the daughter of a former love, it becomes more personal...and more frightening when her daughter gets drawn in.

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Carey says

I found this book quite suspenseful, with red herrings thrown in, making it hard to guess the killer. The promotional material for "Trace Evidence" compared the book to the Patricia Cornwall series; I didn't feel this was quite right. "Trace Evidence" wasn't nearly as graphic as the Kay Scarpetta books, nor as bogged down in technicalities. "Trace Evidence" did, though, show some of the forensic goings-on, which I liked, as they didn't take over the book. (I liked the early Scarpetta books when they first came out, but the newer ones just don't appeal.) I will look to see if there are more books after "Trace Evidence".

Kim Bardon says

Finding the story a little slow and then a rush to get all the information out at the end.

Morgan Bardon says

So, I have read a lot of Kathy Reichs over the years, and this book came with the cover sticker stating that if you like Kathy Reichs, then you would like this. This could well have been a *Bones* story line. Separated woman working for the ME's office, with a daughter (teenager rather than in her twenties), still talking to the ex-husband, solving crimes with a cop she likes (and who likes her romantically), and basically doing her own thing outside of the policies that are in place for her job resulting in her getting into trouble.

The story was good, different, and somewhat predictable, but look I read it and enjoyed it. If you have read Kathy Reichs however, you will see a lot of similarities.

Jan says

Another trace evidence scientist in the Cleveland morgue office is featured in a mystery series. This one features Evelyn James who appears more normal--a single parent of a teenager with attitude whose father and his new wife make everything more complicated. And, it's not as if these cases aren't complicated enough--young women wearing cement "shoes" and drowned along the Cleveland Metropark. Are all the missing young women possibly down below bridges? The weather is getting too cold to send scuba divers down to check. Then, a second young girl is found along the banks; she had almost made it to freedom. It's the Mayor's daughter; the Mayor who was Evelyn's college lover. More pressure is exerted by the new homicide detective who can. not. make another mistake. Great denouement!

Louise Byron says

I got given this book from a pal, and had never heard of the author. But as I do like crime books, I gave it a whirl. Nicely done, good pacing and it kept me engrossed the whole way through. Worth a read.

Krystal C. | says

Honestly, this one caught my attention because the story is based in Cleveland. Being from Northeast Ohio, I was immediately intrigued. Little did I know that the author is from here and that she has more books based in our CLE. I actually enjoyed this book. I read it in less than 2 days. I blew through the chapters, not wanting to put it down. It may be because I could so vividly picture as many of the landmarks easily appeared in my head. Others complained of the romance part, but let's face it, a Ton of books, of all genres always seem to have a little of that, so it didn't bother me as ai didn't feel it a hinder on the main story at hand. And that's a good old whodunit. I figured it out the moment the person joined the book, but I am rather obsessed with true crime, crime, forensic, etc. I recommend this for anyone who enjoys a crime novel and especially the nostalgia of Cleveland

Amy says

Comparable to Patricia Cornwell's Kay Scarpetta and Kathy Reich's Tempe Brennan, this thriller featuring Forensic Scientist, Evelyn James and set in Cleveland is a fantastic addition to the genre.
