

From the author who inspired the  
FOX television drama **BONES**

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

# KATHY REICHS



A NOVEL

# DEATH DU JOUR

Death Du Jour by Kathy Reichs

"Completely engrossing ... Read this and you'll know why the word

"thriller" was invented' Frances Fyfield, Express

"Another day. Another death. Death du Jour. My God, how many such days would there be?"

"A gripping read' Daily Mail

"This novel truly deserves the publishing cliché "unquestionable" ...

The addictive winning formula created by Ms Reichs ... is a believable and likeable central character in forensic expert Dr. Temperance Brennan, a cracking plot, and, naturally, utterly convincing technical details' Ms London

"Reichs's first novel, which won the Arthur Ellis Award for Best First Novel of 1997, was compared justifiably to the Kay Scarpetta novels of Patricia Cornwell. Soon, Cornwell's novels may be compared to Reichs's' Publishers Weekly

"This impressive thriller offers an illuminating account of the psychology of cults and their terrifying influences' Good Housekeeping

"A nail-biter, along the lines of Patricia Cornwell, only much better.

Kathy Reichs has perfected the art of the page-turner novel; at the end of every chapter is a hook you can't ignore. You have to keep on reading' Choice

"A gripping read' Daily Mail

"A real gift for the page-turning nail-biter of a thriller' Manchester Evening News

"Compelling and dramatic ... a thriller of real quality' Yorkshire Evening Post

Kathy Reichs is forensic anthropologist for the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, State of North Carolina, and for the Laboratoire de Sciences Judiciaires et de Medecine Legale for the province of Quebec.

She is one of only 50 forensic anthropologists certified by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology and is on the board of the directors of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. A professor of anthropology at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Dr.

Reichs is a native of Chicago, where she received her Ph.D. at Northwestern. She now divides her time between Charlotte and Montreal and is a frequent expert witness in criminal trials.

Deja Dead, her- first novel, shot straight to number one of the Sunday Times bestsel er list and won the 1997 El is Award for Best First Novel. It became an international bestsel er, as did its successors Death du Jour and Deadly Decisions, Fatal Voyage, the next Kathy Reichs novel featuring Temperance Brennan is published in Arrow paperback in Spring 2002.

Also by Kathy Reichs

Deja Dead

Death du Jour

Deadly Decisions

Fatal Voyage

KATHY REICHS

Death du Jour

Published in the United Kingdom in 2000 by Arrow Books

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To al who survived the Great Quebec Ice Storm of 1998.

Nous nous souvenons.

The characters and events in this book are fictional and created out of the imagination of the author. The setting is in Montreal, Canada; Charlotte, North Carolina; and other locations. Certain real locations and institutions are mentioned, but the characters and events depicted are entirely fictional.

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## DEATH DU JOUR

One.

If the bodies were there, I couldn't find them.

Outside, the wind howled. Inside the old church, just the scrape of my trowel and the hum of a portable generator and heater echoed eerily in the huge space. High above, branches scratched against boarded windows, gnarled fingers on plywood blackboards.

The group stood behind me, huddled but not touching, fingers curled tightly in pockets. I could hear the shifting from side to side, the lifting of one foot, then the other. Boots made a crunching sound on the frozen ground. No one spoke. The cold had numbed us into silence.

I watched a cone of earth disappear through quarter-inch mesh as I spread it gently with my trowel. The granular subsoil had been a pleasant surprise.

Given the surface, I had expected permafrost the entire depth of the excavation. The last two weeks had been unseasonably warm in Quebec, however, allowing snow to melt and ground to thaw. Typical Tempe luck. Though the tickle of spring had been blown away by another arctic blast, the

mild spell had left the dirt soft and easy to dig. Good. Last night the temperature had dropped to seven degrees Fahrenheit. Not good. While the ground had not refrozen, the air was frigid. My fingers were so cold I could hardly bend them.

We were digging our second trench. Still nothing but pebbles and rock fragments in the screen. I didn't anticipate much at this depth, but you could never tell. I'd yet to do an exhumation that had gone as planned.

I turned to a man in a black parka and a tuque on his head. He wore leather boots laced to the knee, two pairs of socks rolled over the tops. His face was the color of tomato soup.

"Just a few more inches." I gave a palm-down gesture, like stroking a cat. Slowly. Go slowly.

The man nodded, then thrust his long-handled spade into the shallow trench, grunting like Monica Seles on a first serve.

"Par pouces!" I yelled, grabbing the shovel. By inches! I repeated the slicing motion I'd been showing him all morning. "We want to take it down in thin layers." I said it again, in slow, careful French.

The man clearly did not share my sentiment. Maybe it was the tediousness of the task, maybe the thought of unearthing the dead.

Tomato soup just wanted to be done and gone.

"Please, Guy, try again?" said a male voice behind me.

"Yes, Father." Mumbled.

Guy resumed, shaking his head, but skimming the soil as I'd shown him, then tossing it into the screen. I shifted my gaze from the black dirt to the pit itself, watching for signs that we were nearing a burial.

We'd been at it for hours, and I could sense tension behind me. The nuns'

rocking had increased in tempo. I turned to give the group what I hoped was a reassuring look. My lips were so stiff it was hard to tel .

Six faces looked back at me, pinched from cold and anxiousness. A smal cloud of vapor appeared and dissolved in front of each. Six smiles in my direction. I could sense a lot of praying going on.

Ninety minutes later we were five feet down. Like the first, this pit had produced only soil. I was certain I had frostbite in every toe, and Guy was ready to bring in a backhoe. Time to regroup.

"Father, I think we need to check the burial records again."

He hesitated a moment. Then, "Yes. Of course. Of course. And we could al use coffee and a sandwich."

The priest started toward a set of wooden doors at the far end of the abandoned church and the nuns fol owed, heads down, gingerly navigating the lumpy ground. Their white veils spread in identical arcs across the backs of their black wool coats. Penguins. Who'd said that? The Blues Brothers.

I turned off the mobile spotlights and fel in step, eyes to the ground, amazed at the fragments of bone embedded in the dirt floor.

Great. We'd dug in the one spot in the entire church that didn't contain burials.

Father Menard pushed open one of the doors and, single file, we exited to daylight. Our eyes needed little adjustment. The sky was leaden and seemed to hug the spires and towers of al the buildings in the convent's compound. A raw wind blew off the Laurentians, flapping col ars and veils.

Our little group bent against the wind and crossed to an adjacent building, gray stone like the church, but smal er. We climbed steps to an ornately carved wooden porch and entered through a side door.

Inside, the air was warm and dry, pleasant after the bitter cold. I smel ed tea

and mothballs and years of fried food.

Wordlessly, the women removed their boots, smiled at me one by one, and disappeared through a doorway to the right just as a tiny nun in an enormous ski sweater shuffled into the foyer. Fuzzy brown reindeer leaped across her chest and disappeared beneath her veil. She blinked at me through thick lenses and reached for my parka. I hesitated, afraid its weight would tip her off balance and send her crashing to the tile. She nodded sharply and urged me with upturned fingertips, so I slipped the jacket off, laid it across her arms, and added cap and gloves. She was the oldest woman that I had ever seen still breathing.

I followed Father Menard down a long, poorly lit hallway into a small study. Here the air smelled of old paper and schoolhouse paste. A crucifix loomed over a desk so large I wondered how they'd gotten it through the door. Dark oak paneling rose almost to the ceiling.

Statues stared down from the room's upper edge, faces somber as the figure on the crucifix.

Father Menard took one of two wooden chairs facing the desk, gestured me to the other. The swish of his cassock. The click of his beads.

For a moment I was back at St. Barnabas. In Father's office. In trouble again. Stop it, Brennan. You're over forty, a professional. A forensic anthropologist.

These people called you because they need your expertise.

The priest retrieved a leather-bound volume from the desktop, opened it to a page with a green ribbon marker, and positioned the book between us. He took a deep breath, pursed his lips, and exhaled through his nose.

I was familiar with the diagram. A grid with rows divided into rectangular plots, some with numbers, some with names. We'd spent hours poring over it the day before, comparing the descriptions and records for the graves with their positions on the grid. Then we'd paced it all off, marking exact locations.