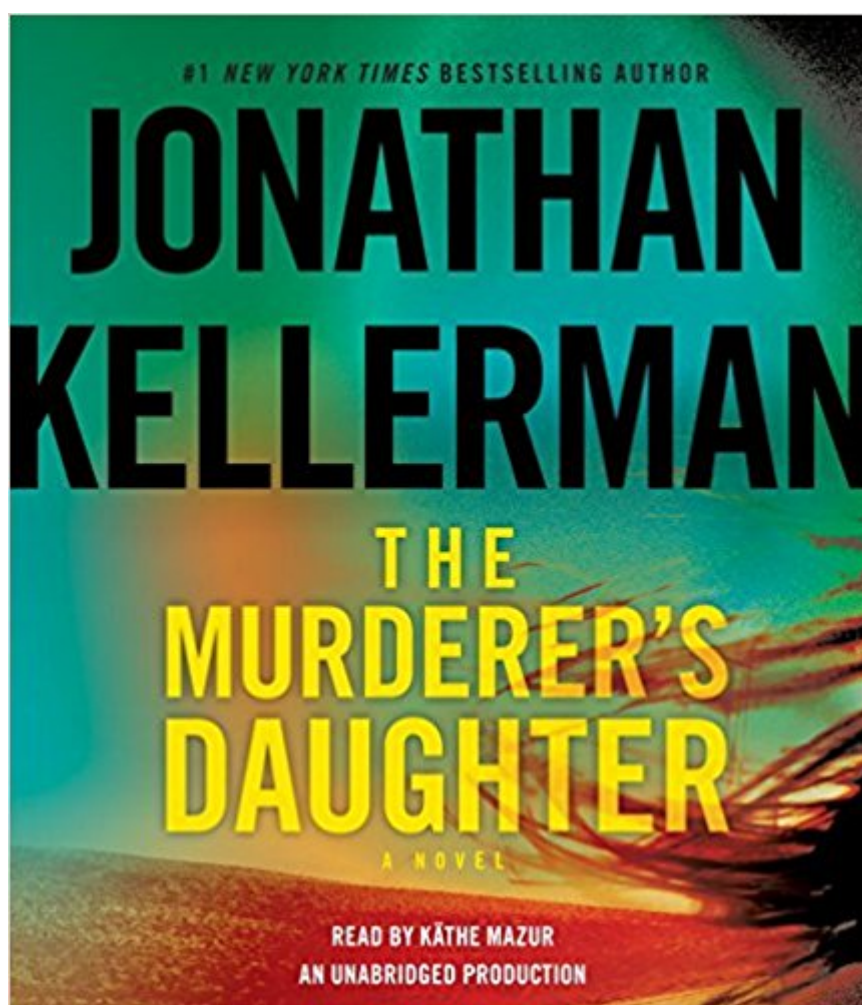


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The Murderer's Daughter: A Novel



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER From the creator of the acclaimed Alex Delaware series comes a tour de force standalone novel that illustrates perfectly why Jonathan Kellerman has justly earned his reputation as a master of the psychological thriller. A brilliant, deeply dedicated psychologist, Grace Blades has a gift for treating troubled souls and tormented psyches—perhaps because she bears her own invisible scars: Only five years old when she witnessed her parents' deaths in a bloody murder-suicide, Grace took refuge in her fierce intellect and found comfort in the loving couple who adopted her. But even as an adult with an accomplished professional life, Grace still has a dark, secret side. When her two worlds shockingly converge, Grace's harrowing past returns with a vengeance. Both Grace and her newest patient are stunned when they recognize each other from a recent encounter. Haunted by his bleak past, mild-mannered Andrew Toner is desperate for Grace's renowned therapeutic expertise and more than willing to ignore their connection. And while Grace is tempted to explore his case, which seems to eerily echo her grim early years, she refuses—a decision she regrets when a homicide detective appears on her doorstep. An evil she thought she'd outrun has reared its head again, but Grace fears that a police inquiry will expose her double life. Launching her own personal investigation leads her to a murderously manipulative foe, one whose warped craving for power forces Grace back into the chaos and madness she'd long ago fled. Praise for *The Murderer's Daughter*—[A] taut thriller . . . with the richness and resonance of literary fiction. —Washington Independent Review of Books —A stunning page-turner with a truly fascinating femme fatale at its fast-beating heart . . . packed with ingenious, razor-sharp plotting, mesmerizing mind games and nail-biting suspense. —Yorkshire Evening Post —A tight, fast-paced narrative [with] a brilliant, kick-ass heroine. —Library Journal —Kellerman doesn't let off-the-charts genius Grace become one-dimensional. Her backstory and challenge to fit in, even into adulthood, are an engaging part of this satisfying mystery, which, though billed as a stand-alone, could certainly make a spin-off series. —Booklist —An amazing tale of survival and adaptability in the face of neglect and murder. —RT Book Reviews —Praise for Jonathan Kellerman —Kellerman's psychology skills and dark imagination are a potent literary mix. —Los Angeles Times —Kellerman doesn't just write psychological thrillers—he owns the genre. —Detroit Free Press

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Wow! I never thought I would have to apologize for writing a 5 star review and enjoying a novel, and I am not going to start now. I loved this book and am proudly going to state that in the following review:Jonathan Kellerman has written a stand-alone novel in the genre he is so famous for, mystery/thriller. In my usual manner with a JK novel, I devoured it from front to back within a few days. And, I was sad when it was over. Mr. Kellerman is the author of the popular Alex Delaware series of novels, and I have read every one, and thoroughly enjoyed them. This new book is no exception. As in the Delaware series, the protagonist is a psychologist. Grace has a traumatic past, herself, so this helped to propel her into becoming a therapist. In typical Kellerman fashion, the heroine's life intersects with someone from her past, and, before she knows it, she is knee deep in trouble with a murder and a mystery of her own to piece together and solve.I think the reason people are having trouble relating to Grace as a "real" person is because I believe Kellerman created a sociopathic heroine. Not everyone who is a sociopath or psychopath leads a criminal lifestyle. Grace may be an example (albeit fictional) of a person with this psychological profile (stunted upbringing, lack of parental nurturing, foster care child, learned early to do/say what made people happy, highly intelligent, etc.) who turned their personality disorder into a productive lifestyle. Her character "flaw" actually works for the profession she is in--she knows exactly how to nurture others and tell them what they need to hear, although, may be unable to experience those feelings and emotions, herself (hence, her strange/detached sexual liaisons).

Life is a far cry from Grace's desperate beginnings. Now an independently wealthy, wildly successful psychologist, she was born into a family of violent, addicted losers. After the brutal

deaths of her parents, she is shunted into the foster care system. Intellectually gifted, she quickly learns to keep to herself. Her life takes a turn for the better when she is placed at a ranch run by an elderly widow. The woman's brother-in-law, a brilliant psychologist, takes a strong interest in Grace. But death interrupts her happiness at the ranch after the admission of three strange children. Luckily the psychologist and his wife intervene and Grace thinks the nightmares of the past are long gone. But she is wrong. When a one night stand turned patient winds up murdered, Grace decides that no bad deed should be left unpunished. Although well written, this book was not successful. I was not convinced by Grace. She seems as sociopathic as her quarry. Her transformation from emotionally unavailable, suspicious foster child to compassionate shrink was not credible. She is highly manipulative, faking empathy and affection. Her wild sexual forays were unhealthy and risky, certainly not the behavior of a well adjusted individual. Her promiscuity does not seem believable. She was not sexually abused as a child and detests physical contact. Similarly, her interest in weaponry and self defense is extreme. Selfish and cold, her role as defender of the downtrodden blessed with superhuman abilities was unconvincing. She stalks, she kills and disposes of the body and the evidence. Her detective skills are extraordinary. The cop on the case disappears after a limited appearance and the details of the crimes are, for the most part, speculation on Grace's part.

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