

The Bone Garden: A Novel

By Tess Gerritsen

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Unknown bones, untold secrets, and unsolved crimes from the distant past cast ominous shadows on the present in the dazzling new thriller from *New York Times* bestselling author Tess Gerritsen.

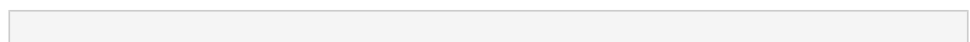
Present day: Julia Hamill has made a horrifying discovery on the grounds of her new home in rural Massachusetts: a skull buried in the rocky soil—human, female, and, according to the trained eye of Boston medical examiner Maura Isles, scarred with the unmistakable marks of murder. But whoever this nameless woman was, and whatever befell her, is knowledge lost to another time. . . .

Boston, 1830: In order to pay for his education, Norris Marshall, a talented but penniless student at Boston Medical College, has joined the ranks of local “resurrectionists”—those who plunder graveyards and harvest the dead for sale on the black market. Yet even this ghoulish commerce pales beside the shocking murder of a nurse found mutilated on the university hospital grounds. And when a distinguished doctor meets the same grisly fate, Norris finds that trafficking in the illicit cadaver trade has made him a prime suspect.

To prove his innocence, Norris must track down the only witness to have glimpsed the killer: Rose Connolly, a beautiful seamstress from the Boston slums who fears she may be the next victim. Joined by a sardonic, keenly intelligent young man named Oliver Wendell Holmes, Norris and Rose comb the city—from its grim cemeteries and autopsy suites to its glittering mansions and centers of Brahmin power—on the trail of a maniacal fiend who lurks where least expected . . . and who waits for his next lethal opportunity.

With unflagging suspense and pitch-perfect period detail, *The Bone Garden* deftly interweaves the thrilling narratives of its nineteenth- and twenty-first century protagonists, tracing the dark mystery at its heart across time and place to a finale as ingeniously conceived as it is shocking. Bold, bloody, and brilliant, this is Tess Gerritsen’s finest achievement to date.

From the Hardcover edition.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

At the start of this disappointing stand-alone thriller from bestseller Gerritsen (*The Mephisto Club*), 38-year-old divorcée Julia Hamill discovers a skeleton buried in the garden of the Boston house she's just moved into; the ring found with the remains was in fashion in the 1830s, the fractured bones suggest murder. Flashback to 1830: medical student Norris Marshall, an outcast among his wealthier classmates, meets Rose Connolly in a Boston maternity ward, where Rose's sister recently died of childbirth fever. When several gutted bodies turn up in deserted alleyways, Rose and Norris are the only ones to catch a glimpse of the killer, dubbed the West End Reaper. Norris, Rose and Norris's fellow student, Oliver Wendell Holmes, race to uncover the truth behind the slayings, which will remind many of Jack the Ripper's crimes. In the present, Julia is able to trace their progress with the help of a relative of the house's former owner. Unfortunately, neither the present nor the historical story line maintains the suspense necessary for a whodunit spanning several generations. (*Sept.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Medical examiner Maura Isles returns in another thriller that joins past and present. In the present, in the backyard of Julia Hamill's old Boston house, a long-buried body is unearthed. In 1830, long before the invention of the term serial killer, medical student Norris Marshall is accused of being a mass murderer. To dig himself out from under suspicion, Norris seeks help from a fellow student, one Oliver Wendell Holmes. Together they pursue the cold-hearted killer, while, in the present day, Julia Hamill tries to find out the identity of the body buried in her backyard. As her fans well know, this is not Gerritsen's first shot at combining the modern and the historical. Yet it reads as though it might be: it's clunky, with overly familiar plotting and an attempt at 1830s-era dialogue that's often painful to the ear. Incorporating real people into historical fiction is a well-worn device, and while the author succeeds in bringing Holmes vividly to life, she doesn't really do anything particularly special with him—a fictional character would have served the story just as well. This is a passable thriller—Gerritsen does generate a fair amount of suspense—but it fails to come together on any level beyond plot. Recommendable, finally, only because the author's many fans will want to read it. Pitt, David

Review

Praise for *The Mephisto Club*

“Equally fascinating and horrifying . . . The pages seem to turn themselves.”

–The Boston Globe

“Powerful . . . white-knuckle suspense at its finest.”

–Mississippi Clarion-Ledger

“A potpourri of thrills.”

–Orlando Sentinel

“A tale that will keep readers feverishly turning pages.”

–Newsday

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Walter Chacon:

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