



The Bone Collection: Four Novellas

Kathy Reichs

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A collection of pulse-pounding tales featuring forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan including the untold story of her first case!

The #1 "New York Times" bestselling author behind the hit Fox series "Bones," Kathy Reichs is renowned for chilling suspense and fascinating forensic detail. "The Bone Collection" presents her trademark artistry in this collection of thrilling short fiction.

In "First Bones," a prequel to Reichs's first novel, "DejaDead," she at last reveals the tale of how Tempe became a forensic anthropologist. In this never-before-published story, Tempe recalls the case that lured her from a promising career in academia into the grim but addictive world of criminal investigation. (It all began with a visit from a pair of detectives and a John Doe recovered from an arson scene in a trailer.) The collection is rounded out with three more stories that take Tempe from the low country of the Florida Everglades, where she makes a grisly discovery in the stomach of an eighteen-foot Burmese python, to the heights of Mount Everest, where a frozen corpse is unearthed. No matter where she goes, Tempe's cases make for the most gripping reading.

Praise for Kathy Reichs and the Temperance Brennan series

Nobody does forensics thrillers like Kathy Reichs. She's the real deal. David Baldacci

Kathy Reichs writes smart no, make that brilliant mysteries that are as realistic as nonfiction and as fast-paced as the best thrillers about Jack Reacher or Alex Cross. James Patterson

Every minute in the morgue with Tempe is golden. "The New York Times Book Review"

The Bone Collection: Four Novellas Details

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From Reader Review The Bone Collection: Four Novellas for online ebook

Matt says

In this collection of short stories based on the highly popular Temperance Brennan series, Reichs allows readers to enjoy four pieces in a single collection. While three have been on the market before, Reichs includes one that speaks of how Tempe found forensic anthropology, surely of greatest interest to series fans. As I have read three of these before, I will paste my previous reviews on the date they were posted to GoodReads, and then expound on the never before published piece.

Bones in her Pocket (4 stars)

Fans of the Reichs series starring Tempe Brennan will love this short story as a teaser before the next major literary release. Reichs offers up a teaser of the upcoming novel *Bones of the Lost* (which I left untouched) to lure her most ardent fans into devouring this quick read. When few bones turn up in a lake, Brennan must use all her forensic anthropological skills to solve this whodunit. What looks to be a simple case of 'identify those bones' turns into a much larger mystery, which is more multi-faceted than it appears. The chase is on and another set of forensic clues leads to a second case, with an end that no one sees coming. Reichs is able to boil down her full-length novels into a short story, yet does not lose any of its excitement.

Reichs has proven her ability to present an equally exciting story without the character development and personal drama. Still filled with her poison-tongue writing style, peppered with humour as well, Reichs tells a gruesome story and uses her famed character's abilities to crack the case wide open. When things veer away from simple bone identification, Brennan turns into a super sleuth and puts her own life in danger to tie up all the loose ends. A wonderful appetizer as fans wait for the next instalment of the Brennan saga, well worth the annual wait.

Swamp Bones (4 stars)

Reichs teases her readers with this wonderful novella ahead of her next full-length sensation. When Dr. Brennan heads to the Florida Everglades on a brief vacation, she's called to help a long-time friend with a project fit for the birds. Learning more about the local Burmese python situation, the avowed foe of all animals of the Everglades, Brennan assists with a necropsy that reveals something with which she is greatly familiar; bones from a dead body. Brennan abandons her vacation ideas and begins looking for clues as to whose bones these might be and how they might have died. Once she becomes sure that the victim met their match at the hands of a human and not the python, Brennan pieces things together in her sleuthing ways. Even with a name for the victim, little is known about the rationale or how to stop more killings. When more bones surface, it is up to Brennan and the local Miami-Dade Police to catch the killer before more bodies can slither out of sight. A highly informative story, filled with Brennan's stubborn wit and great anthropological learning experiences.

Reichs rarely falls flat when she uses her Tempe Brennan character. No matter the locale or the crime, the story always expands in ways unseen at the beginning. Reichs uses so many ideas and finds gold in them all, showing how versatile and all encompassing forensic anthropology can be. I am eager to see if there are ties with this novella and her upcoming book, meant for the most attentive readers and greatest fans.

Bones on Ice (5 stars)

Kathy Reichs uses all her skills in this unique novella, which sees forensic anthropologist Temperance (Tempe) Brennan involved in a cold case like no other, foul play atop Mount Everest. When Tempe is called in to work on a weekend, she's less than impressed. Once she learns that she's personally been requested to handle the identification of a frozen, mummified corpse, things get a little more interesting. While trekking

up Mount Everest, Brighton Hallis perished amongst the elements, the rest of her crew finding her body on their descent. It's been three years and Tempe must work with what she has to determine if this is, in fact, Brighton. With over 200 bodies scattered around the "death zone" area of Everest, it is anything but a foregone conclusion that these remains are those of Brighton. Reichs explores the world of mountain climbing, where individuals lose their identity and become known by their coloured clothing, the only differential when surrounded by snow and ice. What appears to be a simple body succumbing to the elements soon becomes a murder victim, leaving Tempe to piece it all together. Was it one of the climbing crew with a vendetta that wanted Brighton to die up where no one would find her, or perhaps a rival climber who wanted glory? All this leaves the legal argument of charging anyone in Charlotte with a crime that took place in Nepal. In her anthropological sleuthing way, Tempe pieces it all together, but finds herself more confused the further she digs. A wonderful novella to bridge the time until the next full-length Tempe Brennan novel hits the shelves.

Reichs remains the queen of her craft and is as entertaining as she is educational. Tackling forensics in ways no other author (outside the field) has ever attempted, she keeps the reader curious and wondering throughout this piece. From the medical terminology surrounding climbing to the legal matters of a murder on the other side of the world, Reichs leaves few rocks unturned in a short period. Pepper in some humour and a little character bridging between the two major novels and you have a wonderful novella that is sure to tide avid fans over, but not for too long.

First Bones (5 stars)

In this story, Reichs finally offers patient readers a glimpse into how Temperance Brennan got involved in the world of forensic science, as well as introducing a number of characters important throughout the entire series. As the narrative opens in the present day, Brennan is holding vigil for someone in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, their injuries serious, but still no inkling of their identity for the sake of the reader. At this point, the story shifts into an indeterminate past, with Brennan working at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, trying to finish her PhD with a focus in bioarcheology. Newly-minted Detective Erskine "Skinny" Slidell barges in and demands to see Dr. Becknell, whose experience working alongside the authorities makes her a hot commodity and the apparent forensic archeology of the time. With Becknell on sabbatical, Brennan reluctantly agrees to assist Slidell, examining some charred remains. What was left of a body was found at a fire inside the trailer of Dr. Keith Millikin, who has been running a free clinic for the homeless population around Charlotte. With Millikin missing for the past week, he appears to be the likely victim, though Brennan will have to positively identify him for the authorities. Brought to the Mecklenburg County Medical Examiner's office, Brennan meets Dr. Tim Larabee, who allows her to use the facility to complete her examinations, as well as tossing her some additional work when needed. While working with the limited collection of bones she has on hand, Brennan discovers a bullet hole in the back of the skull and surmises that the fire was not the cause of this man's death. Dental records confirm that Millikin has not perished in the fire, which is substantiated when the physician appears after a trip south of the border, claiming that he needed some time away. However, Slidell is able to use his crass nature to present an alternate victim, a dentist who runs his own shop and has been cited for health code violations, who is also missing and ends up being a patient of Dr. Millikin. After a body is pulled from a car, left charred as well, Slidell cannot help but wonder if there is a connection. Two bodies, a murderer still on the loose, and Brennan is getting the hang of this forensic anthropology, with a real case on her hands. As Slidell works to nail down a suspect and motive, Brennan offers up a theory based on what she's seen. After Millikin admits he may have a patient with motive to come after the two victims, Slidell and Brennan rush to a scene, in hopes of stopping any more bloodshed. The motive becomes clear and Brennan becomes more hands-on than Slidell could have imagined, or likely wanted. Moving back to the present, Reichs offers readers the identify of the person in the hospital bed, speculating on the randomness of crimes and victims, though the end result is sure to pull on the heartstrings of the series fan. A wonderful book-end short story for Tempe Brennan fans that solidifies the superior writing style of Kathy Reichs!

I remember beginning this series years ago and how drawn I was to the characters and the ideas behind it.

Reichs has continued to develop her characters, both in Charlotte and Montreal, while keeping Dr. Tempe Brennan realistic and in touch with the changes in the field. Some authors falter the more they write in a series, though Reichs seems to get better, pulling on her own experiences. This short story offers that longed for answer of how Tempe got into the field while also permitting the reader to feel the intensity that comes with any case. Much can be learned from this story, as Reichs continues to teach her series regulars both inside the lab and in life's crazy turns.

Kudos, Madam Reichs for never giving up on Tempe Brennan or your abilities. You dazzle and continue to impress. Please don't take Tempe away from us, as she leave the television screen next spring.

Like/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

Kyla says

I wasn't going to re-read the first three novellas since I'd already read them when they were released so I skipped to First Bones... and didn't enjoy it as much as I'd hoped. It was good, but it wasn't great. It contained wonderful lines like "...we sit in a quiet made up of a hundred small sounds." The end made me cry. But, overall, it just didn't wow me.

I went back and re-read the other three novellas, thinking perhaps I just wasn't in the mood/was misremembering the quality... nope; I loved them just as much after a second reading. I read through First Bones again, thinking perhaps I'd enjoy it more after the second reading... nope, still not my cup of tea.

Individually, the first three novellas each got 5 stars. If I were to give First Bones an individual rating, I'd have to give it 3. This pains me both as a lover of origin stories and a massive fan of Kathy Reichs.

Liz Barnsley says

****4.5 stars****

Now I'm a huge fan of Kathy Reichs, not just of her writing either, so a collection of novella's featuring the ever durable Tempe Brennan was a dream read for me.

And they were GREAT too especially First Bones which takes us back to the start of it all – these were all new to me although I believe they are not all newly published here. Each one was a mini thriller, with the usual forensic fascination (I love how compelling all the detail is in the cases Tempe takes on I always go google mad after reading anything from this author) and twisty turns in the plot that keep you on your toes.

I never like to put this series down so it was great to be able to start and finish a story in one sitting, although to be fair I did want to read the next immediately but then you know. Thats how it goes. The writing is immersive as ever, the authenticity shines for obvious reasons and each one was as gripping as any of the full length novels.

Talking of which I can't wait for more. This series for me has only grown stronger, I can't imagine that I will ever get bored of it. Hope we get a good few more yet.

Highly Recommended.

Laura Rash says

I enjoyed all 4 of these novellas especially First Bones which tells the story of how Tempe became a forensic anthropologist.

Alex Cantone says

I slid into the booth, directly assessing the pair. Reynolds was big and muscular, probably used to being told he was good-looking. Dark brown eyes. Walnut hair carefully arranged to look carelessly disarranged. Toned forearms bulging from rolled chambray cuffs. Steele looked like a colorless scarecrow burrowing into his leftover air.

With her background as a forensic anthropologist, each of Kathy Reich's four novellas packs a punch, and the reader is spared no detail in the forensic examinations. Yet it is the incisive wit as she observes the living while investigating the circumstances of death that had me riveted.

We learn so much. In "Bones in Her Pocket" there are two victims in the same small area outside Charlotte, NC, where Tempe Brennan is confronted by environmental activists. In "Swamp Bones" her vacation in Florida is curtailed by the discovery of human remains inside a Turkey Vulture, which in turn is being slowly ingested by a Burmese Python, endangered in SE Asia but flourishing in the Everglades where it has no natural predator. In "Bones on Ice" the body of an Everest climber trapped in ice for over 3 years is repatriated to Charlotte-Mecklenburg, with no expense spared by the wealthy parent, and has to be slowly thawed to establish identity and cause of death. And finally, "First Bones" has Tempe witnessing the death of a dear friend (no spoilers!)

Well researched, well written and definitely addictive.

Carla Johnson-Hicks says

I love the Tempe Brennan stories and this collection of four novellas is no exception. Even though they were short and compact they were still very interesting and kept me reading to find out what had happened to the bodies Tempe was examining. Three of the stories were also used to bring attention to an issue. Puppy Mills, Poaching and the support for the Indigenous People of Everest, especially following the Earthquake of 2015. The final story, First Bones takes us back to when Tempe first started work. There were twists and turns in the stories and of course Tempe put herself in danger while investigating. The usual scientific information dealing with forensics was included with enough information to make the stories real.

I liked that I was able to read each story individually and put the book down to go to bed or do other things without having to interrupt the story. That is not to say that I do not want more full length stories about Tempe, but this was a nice change and each story was complete. The one thing missing was the personal life that is such a part of the full length novels. If you enjoy the Tempe Brennan stories, I recommend you pick this one up, you won't be disappointed. I was fortunate to win a copy of this book in a Goodreads Giveaway thanks to the publisher.

Shorty says

This is a collection of four short stories, three of which have already been out for publication before. You might have already read them, like I have. So only the fourth one, First Bones, will be new to you and I. The fourth story was short no sweet, but in a sad way. 3.5 stars.

Donna says

Wow, I really enjoyed reading these 4 novellas, especially First Bones.

Marianne says

The Bone Collection: Four Novellas is an omnibus of novellas in the Temperance Brennan series by forensic anthropologist and popular American author, Kathy Reichs. Three of the novellas have been published in electronic form earlier; First Bones is a new story.

Bones in her Pocket: Tempe is called out to an Artists Colony at Mountain Island Lake in North Carolina, where a bag of bones has washed up. Tempe assumed that this is part of the corpse belonging to some leg bones she has examined, until she finds this corpse already has legs. Masses of tiny bones accompanying the skeleton add an element of intrigue.

This little story has a missing Environmental Sciences student, a crazy-sounding, arrogant environmental protestor, a lecherous lecturer and a gossipy museum volunteer. Tempe gives us interesting tidbits on under water decomps and manages to get herself into hot water.

Swamp Bones: In Florida's Everglades for a break at the invitation of Dr Lisa Robbins, forensic ornithologist, Tempe finds that March is already hot and sticky. Before she even gets a chance to cool down and relax, she manages to get drawn into a murder investigation as she idly rummages through the stomach contents of a Burmese python (as you do). Her incidental finds draw the attention of the local sheriff, a wildlife biologist and a National Parks Law Enforcement officer. The investigation into the identity of the likely victim leads to an encounter with a live alligator, the Miccosukee Indian community and some swamp rednecks.

Tempe's propensity to tackle a situation without support lands her in dangerous waters. Reichs has obviously done quite a bit of research of an ornithological and herpetological nature: this short offering contains plenty of facts about birds and snakes. Who even knew that there was a word for a non-human autopsy?

Bones on Ice: The well-connected Hallis family matriarch insists that Tempe conduct the post mortem on her daughter, whose remains are uncovered after the Nepal earthquake. Brighton Hallis died whilst scaling Mt Everest some three years previously, and her remains were unrecoverable at the time. Tempe finds many things she would expect after three years of exposure to freezing temperatures. But she also finds the unexpected, and her contact with Bright's climbing companions raises more questions than it answers.

In amongst the suspense and intrigue, Reichs manages to include lots of interesting facts about deaths on

Everest, hypothermia and the bizarre associated behaviours, the effects of altitude and temperature on decay and preservation of a corpse, obtaining prints from dehydrated fingers and the effects of freezing on dentition.

First Bones: a prequel to the very first Temperance Brennan novel, Déjà Dead. As Tempe sits at the bedside of a dying friend, she looks back on the case that started her career in forensic anthropology. Tempe's session of scoring foramina of cremains in the lab at UNCC for her PhD dissertation is disturbed by a request to examine the remains of victim found burnt beyond recognition in a trailer. Her reluctance to abandon her research is outweighed by a convincing argument from a Charlotte-Mecklenburg PD detective. A surprise finding on examination of the remains has her so intrigued, a career change results.

This prequel introduces the arrogant and messy Erskine (Skinny) Slidell, the elegant Eddie Rinaldi, and a man who has been Tempe's unfailing mentor from the start of her career, Tim Larabee. Husband Pete is still on the scene, and sister Harry also gets a mention. The banter between Tempe and Slidell is often hilarious. This small dose of Tempe Brennan touches on AIDS, the light spectrum for visualisation of ink on documents and forensic dentistry. An excellent Tempe taster.

Ian says

I'm a big fan of Kathy Reichs but not really a fan of the novella. Still, I enjoyed these stories and, as always, love Ms Reichs' writing style - short sharp sentences and wry observations about the characters Tempe meets along the way. Looking forward to the next full length novel.

Theresa says

The reason I pick up a new "bones" book is because I know what to expect. I like that! There are times when all I want to do is read for enjoyment. I want something that I am not forced to delve into the book in great depth but it still paints a full story. Kathy Reichs always delivers with the Tempe Brennan series. I'm ok with the main character's stupidity and the over-the-top police work if the forensics is spot on and believable! Undoubtedly the best part of these books **is** the believable forensics. (Ok that and maybe Skinny Slidell's imaginative vocabulary!!!) I've heard some criticize because it's too technical. Nonsense! If it was fake I couldn't read it. This book was perfect to take along on vacation. Not only was it a Bones book, it was a collection of 4 short novellas. Although all of them were new to me, I must caution that 3 of stories are previously published so be mindful of that before purchasing this book.

Rating and review of each novella in the order they appear in the book-

Novella #15.5 Bones in Her Pocket My rating = 4 stars

Of all of the stories I'd say this was the weakest link. However, I feel it was adequate and still interesting but it seemed to end without much wrap up. The biggest fault I could find is that it lacked a bit of closure and polish.

Novella #16.5 Swamp Bones My rating = 4 stars

I know this is going to sound very petty but the only reason this story is not getting a higher rating is that it

dealt primarily with two of my most hated things. Alligators and snakes. Ack!! Maybe someday I'll share my story about nearly ending up as alligator kibble! However, I did enjoy reading about the main character, Tempe, in the Florida Everglades instead of the normal North Carolina.

Novella #17.5 Bones on Ice **My rating = 4.5 stars**

I found this story fascinating! I wish the author would have kept this work and created a full length novel as she talked about in the acknowledgments. I think it would have been a truly great Bones book. This story dealt with identification of bones recovered from a Mt. Everest climb. My biggest and probably only fault with this story is that I would have preferred that Tempe been present in Kathmandu somehow instead of being back in North Carolina. I think it would have made the action and story so much more exciting than doing everything remotely.

Novella #0.5 First Bones **My rating =5 stars**

I loved this story because we finally get some "back story" on Tempe. I know we've read a bit here and there about her childhood but this story shows how she got into the world of Forensic Anthropology. I do wish it had been more in depth though. I am cutting it some slack because this story was chock full of Skinny Slidell! My favorite "Bones" character. Also there is a major development in the series because we lose one of the team. I'm surprised she did this in a Novella. I have yet to read what is the next chronological book in the series to see how it's handled, but now I can't wait.

To explain a bit about sequence of the story

0.5 is written as a flashback and the team member dies in what would actually be between #18 and #19. I do not know why the powers that be chose to market this novella an origin story and put it at # 0.5 but alas they did. I believe it should have come later in the sequence like the way most of us have already read the series because we know the character and the death means something to us. If a person starts with this novella it will not have the same impact.

How I figured my rating overall $(4 \times 4.5 \times 4.5 \times 5) / 4 = 4.3$ so therefore rounded down to 4 stars

4*/ 4.18

Mary says

Oh, Kathy Reichs how I've missed you and Temperance Brennan. I have to say you know how to write a novella and make it seem like a complete novel, unlike some writers. I learned a lot in these 4 stories dealing with dangers from nature and animals helped by human involvement. I especially enjoyed learning how Temperance Brennan got her start with the ME office.

Christine says

Every crime fan has heard of Kathy Reichs and her forensic crime series featuring Temperance Brennan. The Bone Collection is her first collection of short stories.

The first story 'Bones in Her Pocket' introduces Tempe. She describes in gorgeous detail how a body that

has been submerged in waters presents. Tempe reads bodies and the clues they give us, after death. She compares her findings to a missing person's report. Slowly Tempe gets a sense of who the police should be looking for. This is not a case of an accidental death, but of murder and animal cruelty.

In 'First Bones', we discover how Tempe Brennan entered the world of forensics. This is the story that starts before Kathy Reich's first novel. Tempe is waiting in a Surgical Intensive Care Unit, watching a patient hooked up to a morphine IV line. This is someone she knows and cares about. The story switches to Tempe as a bioarcheologist and Phd student at the University of North Carolina. She is asked to help out on a case of a man who has been burnt to death. Be prepared to be unsettled by this story.

As a relative newcomer to this series, I found it all incredibly well done and refreshing. You really get a sense of the complex forensic work that Tempe does and how she adds to the police investigation. I always love how the explanations for oddities in the cadavers. For anyone who hasn't dipped into this series, this would be an ideal place to start. Kathy Reichs shows her talent in this field and her capacity to engage the reader, with these great short stories. They did leave me wanting more.

Great authentic quick reads, for those of us into our forensic science. Ideal for those moments, when you want a well written intelligent story to fill a gap in your day. Not for the squeamish or easily scared. Recommended.

Nancy The book junkie says

Review coming soon!

Michele A. says

These 4 novellas are perfect for the reader who wants a quick, easy read and then move onto something else. I had read 2 out of the 4 novellas so it was an even quicker read for me. First Bones broke my heart. It was nice to see Tempe's first case and how she and Skinny traded barbs back then. Both of them appeared to be "newbies" and were each kind of set in their ways even at the beginning of their working relationship. Tempe begins the story sitting bedside in the Surgical Trauma ICU and begins to reflect on how her career began. She was just trying to get her Ph.D. and minding her own business when fate changed her life's direction a bit. Skinny saw the usefulness of her even back then and used her to further his cases along. Tempe and Pete were still married and he was already trying cases. We soon discover how grave the situation is at the present and Tempe is left reeling with the news. Even though she knows what is coming, she is unprepared for it at the end. It was touching and the ending was a bit shocking.
