



A Terrible Beauty

Graham Masterton

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"There are things I need to know..." On a farm in southern Ireland, the dismembered bones of eleven women are found in a common grave, buried eight decades ago. Detective Superintendent Katie Maguire is used to bloodshed, but this ivory litter of human remains is unimaginable butchery.

"Of other worlds apart from this..."

In isolated darkness not far away, an American tourist is at the mercy of a serial killer. His tools are a boning knife, twine, and a doll fashioned from nails and fishhooks. The murder of his victims is second only to the pleasure of their pain.

"Darker places inhabited by evil monstrosities..."

As an eighty-year-old mystery unfolds, so does a modern-day ritual that's marked Katie Maguire as its next victim. For what happened once in this small picturesque village is happening again. It's more than a series of horrifying crimes. It's tradition.

"Take me there."

A Terrible Beauty Details

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Author : Graham Masterton

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From Reader Review A Terrible Beauty for online ebook

Petra says

White Bones introduces Detective Katie Maguire. When the bones of 11 women are found on an isolated farm in County Cork in Ireland, Katie is initially told to drop the case as the deaths date back to 1915. But then a young American tourist goes missing and her body turns up on the same farm.

I've been hesitant for a while now to start this series because of the mixed reviews and mentions of 'supernatural', but it turned out to be a really solid Irish crime procedural and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The plot centers around old Irish folklore/myths rather than the paranormal elements I was expecting and that added a really interesting aspect to the story. Mr. Masterton has previously written horror novels and while this certainly shines through, I didn't find any of the details overly gory, but I think more sensitive readers may.

The author also provides plenty of background on the main character of Katie Maguire. By the end of the book, you really feel you have a good picture of her as a person. She has to work hard as a female in a very conservative, male dominated environment and her personal life is under scrutiny which isn't helping her marriage.

The audiobook narration was done really well, and I appreciate that the narrator must have had a very difficult time switching from characters with Irish dialect to American accents. I loved the Irish lilt, the American accent felt a bit off (sorry).

If you enjoy rather sinister thrillers in an Irish setting and would like to explore some Irish history and Celtic mythology, I would definitely recommend White Bones.

Dani Jade says

My copy of this is called 'White Bones', (*rather than 'A Terrible Beauty'*) which is a much better, more fitting, name in my opinion.

Anyway, I really enjoyed this novel. It perfectly walked the line between crime and thriller, it was descriptive and gruesome but not off-puttingly so, and the plot and Irish mythology was interesting. The MC, Katie Maguire, was awesome, despite her terrible taste in men (legit hated that husband). She was smart, tough, hardworking and badass but still kind, empathetic and generous.

When a farmer uncovers a pile of bones hidden in his fields, Detective Superintendent Katie Maguire is called to the case. When it's discovered the bones are a hundred years old, the case is put on the back burner... until a brand new set of recent bones turns up on the same farm. With the same distinctions as the first set... information that was not released to the press. Katie must figure out what's going on and catch the killer before another girl dies, whilst simultaneously dealing with her own issues- her husband's started doing business with a notorious criminal.

I've not read any of Masterton's horror novels (though I intend to) so I can't compare, but I imagine his experience with those contributed to the crimes in this novel- they're pretty full on. This is the first in a series (of currently nine, I believe) and it a series I can see myself slowly working my way through.

kostas vamvoukakis says

ειναι μεγαλος μαστορας στο σασπενς αν και στο τελος βιαζεται παντα...σε αυτο τσαλακωσε πολυ την βασικη του ηρωιδα και αυτο μου αρεσε πολυ. το γραψιμο του οπως παντα εξαιρετικο...αν εγραφε αστυνομικα θα ηταν απο τις κορυφες...πολυ ωραιο βιβλιο ...απο τα καλυτερα του 4,5*

Eirini says

Αυτ? το βιβλ?ο τα συνδυ?ζει αστυνομικ? στοιχε?α, μυστηριακ? ατμ?σφαιρα καθ?ς επ?σης και το ανατριχιαστικ? στοιχε?ο του τρ?μου. Σε μ?α φ?ρμα βρ?σκονται θαμμ?να τα οστ? ?ντεκα γυναικ?ν. Και εκε? ξεκιν?ει η ιστορ?α. Καθ?ς η αστυν?μος Κ?ιτι Μαγκου?ιρ, καλε?ται να εξιχνι?σει τι υπ?ρχει π?σω απ? τα πτ?ματα αυτ?, εν? ταυτ?χρονα εμφαν?ζονται ν?α θ?ματα. Αρκετ?ς ανατριχιαστικ?ς περιγραφ?ς που δεν ε?ναι για ?λα τα στομ?για νομ?ζω, ε?ναι οι πρωταγωνιστικ?ς σκην?ς που επικρατο?ν και προσφ?ρουν ?να απολαυστικ? αστυνομικ? τ?ξι?δι τρ?μου. Αυτ? που θεωρ? αρνητικ? ε?ναι ?σως το βιαστικ? τ?λος, που ?ταν αυτ? που περ?μενα, αλλ? λ?γο απ?τομο.

Mary Beth *Traveling Sister* says

Almost 4.5 stars! A good supernatural horror mystery but not for every one! Very grotesque but also scary! If you can handle a lot, and nothing gets to you this one is for you! Its about Superintendent Detective Katie Maguire tries to solve an ancient ritual which is very ominous and scary.

Agapi says

Ο Graham Masterton μου ?ταν γνωστ?ς σαν ?νομα, αλλ? δεν ε?χα διαβ?σει ποτ? καν?να βιβλ?ο του. Η “Τρομερ? Ομορφι?” ?πεσε πριν λ?γο καιρ? στα χ?ρια μου και εν? την κοιτο?σα με μισ? μ?τι, ε?πα τελικ? να δ?σω μια ευκαιρ?α. Το βιβλ?ο αυτ? αποτελε? το πρ?το της σειρ?ς θρ?λερ/μυστηρ?ου με πρωταγων?στρια την αστυν?μο Katie Maguire.

Η υπ?θεση ?χει ως εξ?ς: ομαδικ?ς τ?φος με διασκορπισμ?να κ?καλα 11 γυναικ?ν, θαμμ?νων προ 80 ετ?ν, αποκαλ?πτεται σε μια φ?ρμα της Ιρλανδ?ας και προτο? η Katie καταλαβα?νει τι συμβα?νει, κ?ποιος ξεκιν?ει να σκοτ?νει γυνα?κες με τον ?διο ακριβ?ς τρ?πο.

Δεν ξ?ρω ποιο στοιχε?ο ακριβ?ς ?ταν αυτ? που μου ?φερε αναγο?λα. Σ?γουρα κ?ποιες σκην?ς του βιβλ?ου ε?ναι εντελ?ς απ?νθρωπες, αλλ? οι ανατριχιαστικ?ς περιγραφ?ς δε με ενοχλο?ν π?ντοτε (βλ?πε Jack Ketchum). Να φτα?ει που ο δολοφ?νος ξεπ?τσιαζε γυνα?κες ζωνταν?ς; Να φτα?ει που γκο?γκλαρα για π?σο μπορε? να ζ?σει κ?ποιος χωρ?ς δ?ρμα και μ?ες στα π?δια; Και μ?νο που τα γρ?φω, νομ?ζω πως ακο?ω το στομ?χι μου να παρακαλ?ει για ?λεος. Ο Masterton με ?κανε να αηδι?σω σε ?να ?λλο επ?πεδο, ?γγιξε μια λεπτ? χορδ? που με αναστ?τωσε σε υπερβολικ? βαθμ?. Δε μπα?νω στον κ?πο να βρω γιατ? συν?βη αυτ? – δε θ?λω να ανακαλ?ψω κ?ποιον φ?βο που δεν ?ξερα

τι έχω. Δεν ευχαριστήθηκα την ανήγνωση, αλλά αισθάνθηκα ότι πρέπει να συνεχίσω να το διαβάζω. *αυτομυτιζώνεται* Και πώς να μη θάλω να το συνεχίσω βέβαια, αφού το βιβλίο κυλάει σαν νερόκι; Χωρίς περισπασμούς και με πολλούς διαλόγους, ουσιαστική γλώσσα αφηγηση επικεντρώνεται στην εξέλιξη της υπόθεσης – και βέβαια στην Katie, η οποία είναι μια αρκετά ενδιαφέρουσα και συμπαθητική πρωταγωνίστρια. Θα ήθελα πάρα πολύ να συνεχίσω τη συγκεκριμένη σειρά μ'νο και μ'νο για να τη γνωρίσω καλύτερα, αλλά προτιμώ να μου κ'νουν spoiler πριν δω το τελευταίο επεισόδιο του GoT παρ' να ξαναδιαβάσω βιβλίο του Masterton (βαρ., ε; Αλλά αληθιν?).

Κλασική περίπτωση "it's not you, it's me", αλλά τι να κ'νουμε παιδί, συμβαίνουν αυτά, ακμή και στις καλύτερες βιβλιοθήκες.

Βαθμολογία: ★★☆☆ (2/5)

Emmanuelle says

Ενός λεπτού σιγή για να συνάλω.

Πολλή ξεκοκαλισμάτα, πολλή βία, πολλή αμα. Δεν είναι τόσο το υπερφυσικό στοιχείο που αναστατώνει, όσο οι αιματηρές περιγραφές.

Σίγουρα το επόμενο ανήγνωσμα θα επιδιέξω να είναι πιο... γλυκόλι, παρόλ' αυτό οφέλω να ομολογήσω ότι είναι ένα βιβλίο το οποίο σε κρατάει ως την τελευταία σελίδα.

Αναγνωρίζω τρία πράγματα στον συγγραφέα:

- τις πολλαπλές ανατροπές και το αιφνίδιο τέλος το οποίο διέφυγε των εγκληματολογικών μου προσεγγίσεων που ως λήτρη του αστυνομικού μυθιστορηματός δημιουργή ακουσώς.
- την δυναμική θέση της γυναίκας στο παρ'ν βιβλίο-δεν θα επεκταθ' γιατί δεν θάλω να προδώσω τ'ποτα απ' την πλοκή.
- τη ικανότητα του συγγραφέα να μου δημιουργήσει τ'τοια αναστάτωση που σε κ'ποια σημεία διβάζα με το ένα χ'ρι τοίμο να καλ'ψει ανα π'σα στιγμή τα μ'τια λες και βλέπα ταινία θρ'λερ.

Karl says

The American edition of this book is titled "A Terrible Beauty".

Infada Spain says

?σο κι αν αγαπ? την Ιρλανδ?α και τα βιβλ?α που διαδραματ?ζονται εκε?, δεν μπορ? να πω πως απολαμβ?νω να διαβ?ζω τ?σο τρομακτικ?ς περιγραφ?ς ωμ?ς β?ας...ε?χα καιρ? να πηδ?ξω τ?σα πολλα κεφ?λαια!

Δεν νομ?ζω, β?βαια, πως θ' αντισταθ? στον πειρασμ? να διαβ?σω κι ?,τι ακ?μα π?σει στα χ?ρια μου απ? Masterton και Katie Maguire.

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

I really like this book for a number of reasons. Firstly, it's nice to have a crime writer who is not scared to get a bit gory in their writing, perhaps because Graham Masterton was a writer of horror prior to turning his hand to crime had something to do with this. I say this because there are a few scenes in this great book that would make some people a touch uncomfortable. Okay, maybe really uncomfortable.

I lived in Co. Cork in Ireland many years ago so was familiar with the "Cork lingo" used in the book such as the use of the word "so" at the end of some sentences, this is a common word used in the context of "are you alright so?" but I imagine some readers might think that this book was poorly edited, it's not, it's authentic to Cork slang (there is a glossary of Cork slang at the back of the book).

The book centres around a mass grave of jumbled bones that are found on farmland in Ireland and DCI Katie Maguire's relentless pursuit of the killer/killers. The book incorporates some interesting Irish folklore that many may think is not believed today, but in parts of Ireland superstition and folklore still abounds, it's like a country stuck in a time bubble in some regions in fact, it's also one of my favourite places on earth.

The plot is interesting, with pace from the onset to hook you in, it twists and turns, it makes you squeamish in quite a few scenes. I know some reviewers have commented that this book has an unrealistic storyline, however anyone who has lived in Ireland and knows the history of folklore belief may not think quite so far fetched. It's entertaining and easy to read and I enjoyed reading it very much. I will be looking for the next in the series featuring DCI Katie Maguire. Oh and just when I thought I had worked out who was the killer/s, I was wrong, the book beat me. Book 1, Me 0.

Oh and the ending is good, can't say why, it just is. I can't spoil it for you.

Janet says

A book that has been sitting on my Kindle for a while and recently brought to my attention again, I thought it was high time I went in.

Bones are discovered on Meagher's Farm. These though are dismembered bones of eleven women in total. A high number for one discovery in a land where folklore and mythical legend is rife and stories of old carry though for hundreds of years. The discovery is a gruesome one and is put into the hands of Detective Superintendent Kate Maguire. Focusing on violent and gory rituals from the past the story then shifts to a young girl who is kidnapped and tortured in the extreme. It's at this point that I realised Masterton is a horror writer of old and it really shows in these scenes. Unremittingly violent and gruesome it reminded me of slasher movies that aren't really my thing. In fact, I almost got the feeling that Masterton enjoyed writing those scenes such is the detail present. I'm not easily shocked but at times the book felt more like a horror book than crime and I'm not convinced it really worked here.

The folklore angle is interesting enough with Ireland giving plenty of material to dip into but the storyline did feel a tad unrealistic at times with Maguire being thrown into one endless scenario after another. I mean how much can one woman take?! Seriously?! Without a bit of a meltdown ensuing?!

The story is pacy and definitely keeps interest levels high but it does veer slightly into 'wow, that supernatural ending actually happened' territory. I've definitely got mixed feelings about this book. There's some good storytelling no doubt. I really enjoyed the Cork, Irish setting. I found that really interesting and the mythical legend stuff stayed on the right side of fantasy for my tastes! But I wasn't blown away by it and may leave it a while before I move onto book two. It certainly gives fodder for book group discussion.... I'll say that much!!

Γι?ργος Δ?μτσιος says

Αγ?ρασα και δι?βασα αυτ? το βιβλ?ο το 2012, σχεδ?ν με το που κυκλοφ?ρησε στην Ελλ?δα. Τον προηγ?μενο μ?να το ?κανα μια δε?τερη αν?γνωση-κυρ?ως φρεσκ?ρισμα- περισσότερο επειδ? πλησ?αζε πια η κυκλοφορ?α των Πληγωμ?νων Αγγ?λων, της δε?τερης περιπ?τειας της αστυν?μου Katie Maguire. Να σημει?σω π?ντως πως απ' ?σο γνωρ?ζω κ?τι τ?τοιο δεν ε?ναι αναγκα?ο. Οι ιστορ?ες δεν ?χουν καμ?α σ?νδεση και τα λ?γα σχετικ? ?χουν να κ?νουν με την προσωπικ? ζω? της Katie. (Με σχετικ? επιφ?λαξη, π?ντα).

Η "τρομερ? ομορφι?" συνεχ?ζει να κρατ?ει τον συγγραφ?α στους πολυαγαπημ?νους μου. Δεν ε?ναι κ?λασικ? βιβλ?ο τρ?μου, με την κ?λασικ? Masterton ?ννοια. Ε?ναι μια αστυνομικ? ιστορ?α που μπλ?κει ?να ιστορικ? γεγον?ς απ? το μακριν? 1915 και κομμ?τια της Κ?λτικης μυθολογ?ας, η οπο?α μου αρ?σει πολ?. Σε πολλ? σημει?α μ?λιστα, καταφ?ρνει να τρομ?ξει πολ? περισσότερο απ? παλι?τερα βιβλ?α του, (πχ Δα?μονες της Νορμανδ?ας/Καθρ?φτης), παρ? τα αλλ?κοτα πλ?σματα που καραδοκο?ν εκε?.

?χω κ?ποιες μικρ?ς ενστ?σεις μ?νο με την Λο?σι (spoiler, δεν μπορ? να πω περισσ?τερα!) καθ?ς και με μερικο?ς δευτερε?οντες χαρακτ?ρες που ?μειναν κ?πως ?χρωμοι. Παραμ?νει ωστ?σο ?να π?ρα πολ? ωρα?ο βιβλ?ο.

Jaline says

1. Set up your blender and make sure it is unplugged.
2. Throw in a pile of 80 year old bones from 11 women that have been stripped of all flesh.
3. Add little "dollies" with old screws and nails in them threaded through holes drilled in the tops of the thigh bones.
4. The recipe also calls for two more young women, and the flesh must be stripped before death, if possible.
5. The recipe also calls for a live woman – someone in a position of power, like Detective Superintendent Katie Maguire.

6. Add drownings and near drownings.
7. Add a car bomb and exploding people.
8. Add a person in a coma and another person anchored by their arms while a car takes off with the feet attached to it.
9. Include some throat slicing and one dead of it, one survivor of it.
10. Add in ancient myths, the bombing of the Lusitania, and a pinch of magical realism.
11. Shake ever so gently or stir with care.

This is White Bones and it will scare you silly. The writing is excellent; the pace is so fast, your metabolism will double its normal rate and you will lose 5 lbs.

Whatever you do, do not plug in and turn on your blender.

Claire says

I did really enjoy this book and probably would have given it four stars except for the fact that the plot became a little too preposterous at the end. The central character Katie Maguire was great and the sub-plot around her marriage was an interesting addition. The story flowed really well, albeit with some pretty gruesome moments, right up until the end which seemed really rushed and was the point at which things became a little bit ridiculous particularly in the solving of the case involving the original eleven women's murders. Also, although managing to guess the final twist in terms of 'who done it' would be pretty impressive the introduction of the murder was so obviously suspicious that it was clear they had to be involved and in some ways it didn't completely keep you guessing.

Despite all that, it was a really easy read, well written and captivating enough that I couldn't put it down.

Μαρία Γεωργοπούλου says

Πέρα πολ? καλ?!

Ο συγγραφέας δημιούργη? την κατ?λληλη ατμ?σφαιρα με τις υπ?ροχες περιγραφές του... Ο πολ? καλ?ς τρ?πος γραφές και οι ωρα?ες ανατροπές κ?νουν τον αναγν?στη να μη θ?λει να αφ?σει το βιβλ?ο απ? τα χ?ρια του... ?σο για τους τελετουργικο?ς φ?νος και τη λογικ? π?σω απ? αυτο?ς; Απλ? θα πω πως δυσκολε?τηκα να κοιμηθ? το βρ?δυ!
