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Monster (Alex Delaware, No. 13)

By Jonathan Kellerman



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Alex Delaware is back! And in Jonathan Kellerman's riveting and ingenious new novel, **Monster**, he faces one of the most grisly and baffling mysteries of his career: How can a nonfunctional psychotic locked up in a supposedly secure institution for homicidal madmen predict brutal murders in the outside world? Delaware and his friend and partner Detective Milo Sturgis must penetrate this enigma in order to stop the horrific killings.

A marginal actor is found dead in a car trunk, sawn in half. Months later, a psychologist at a hospital for the criminally insane is discovered murdered and mutilated in a tantalizingly similar way. When reports of an inmate's incoherent ramblings begin to make frightening sense as predictions of yet more slayings, Delaware and Sturgis are drawn into a web of family secrets, vengeance, and manipulation--both inside the asylum and on the streets of L.A., where death, drugs, and sex are marketed as commodities. The climactic discovery they make as they race to prevent more killings gives fresh and terrifying meaning to the concept of monstrosity.

With **Monster's** incomparably deft characterizations and dazzlingly dark plot twists, Jonathan Kellerman further enhances his literary position as master of the psychological thriller.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Consulting psychologist Alex Delaware has a novel approach to crime-solving: he uses his training to unlock the secrets in the minds of the victims and jiggles the clues he finds there until the right scenario emerges. So when Alex's LAPD buddy Milo finds the hacked-up body of a woman psychologist named Claire Argent in an abandoned car trunk--the second such murder in eight months--Alex heads for her place of employment: the Starkweather State Hospital for the Criminally Insane.

One of Argent's patients at Starkweather is Ardis "Monster" Peake, imprisoned for the unbelievably brutal murders of his mother and the family she worked for, including a small child and a baby. There's at least one eerie similarity between the mutilation of their bodies and Argent's: in all the bodies, the eyes were taken or destroyed. But Peake, diagnosed as schizophrenic and psychotic, is a well-behaved vegetable due to a steady diet of Thorazine, and he hasn't left the hospital since his incarceration 15 years before. How is it, then, that Claire Argent's assistant, Heidi Ott, swears she heard Peake say, "Dr. A. Bad eyes in a box" soon after he hears only the bare fact of her death? And why does Alex find Peake so empathetic, in spite of his violent past and chillingly vacant mind? When other mutilated bodies turn up, Alex and Milo begin to suspect that the real monster is very much at large. Like Kellerman's 12 previous Alex Delaware mysteries, *Monster* builds to a big, teeth-clenching bang and ends with some very satisfying surprises. --Barrie Trinkle

From Publishers Weekly

In top form in his latest mystery featuring L.A. forensic psychologist Alex Delaware (who had a bit part in the author's previous novel, *Billy Straight*), Kellerman devises a deviously twisted, contemporary tale that draws pulsing suspense from the ageless relationship between madness and evil. Delaware teams up with his pal Milo Sturgis, of LAPD Homicide, to track the murderer of Claire Argent, a young doctor who worked at Starkweather Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Argent's badly mutilated body connects her death to the unsolved murder of a young, aspiring actor whose body had been sawed in half. Kellerman masterfully strews the trail of the investigation with crumbs, challenging his heroes (and readers) to distinguish promising clues from red herrings. Argent, who recently left a prime research job to work at Starkweather, led an extremely isolated life that had nothing in common with that of the murdered actor. The Starkweather staff is reticent and unhelpful until a young aide reveals that the doctor had been spending time with an inmate known as the Monster, a mentally deficient man who had been convicted of murdering and mutilating a young family 15 years earlier. Kellerman focuses on Delaware and Sturgis as they probe the hospital's milieu, the Monster's crime, the doctor's troubled and puzzling history and additional murders. A tense climax in the hills above L.A. brings together all the tautly woven threads as Kellerman delivers another chilling look into the dark corners of the human psyche. Literary Guild, Doubleday Book Club and Mystery Guild main selections.

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From Library Journal

A handsome young actor is found murdered and mutilated, a female psychologist meets a similar fate, and twin brothers are gruesomely dispatchedAall in separate events, on the same evening. The murders, though different, seem to be the work of the same killer. As Dr. Alex Delaware, psychologist and consultant to the LAPD, and detective Milo Sturgis unravel the mystery of the killer's identity, it becomes clear that Ardis Peake (a.k.a. "Monster"), incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital for the criminally insane for the past 16 years, is somehow involved. Kellerman's 13th novel featuring Alex Delaware includes intelligent, well-drawn characters and the kinds of plot twists that make the best mysteries fun to read. Both fans of the series and

readers not familiar with Kellerman's works should enjoy this novel. Recommended for all public libraries.
-*Leslie Madden, Georgia Inst. of Technology Lib. & Information Ctr., Atlanta*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tammy Crider:

The book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can utilize to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem with your subject. If you can make looking at a book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) being your habit, you can get a lot more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about a few or all subjects. You can know everything if you like open up and read a book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13). Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science reserve or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this reserve?

Timothy McCormack:

Book is to be different for every single grade. Book for children right up until adult are different content. As you may know that book is very important for us. The book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) had been making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is quite advantages for you. The book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) is not only giving you considerably more new information but also being your friend when you experience bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your book. Try to make relationship with all the book *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13). You never really feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

Shannon Blackshear:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be change about what going on or data even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which can be always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe may update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know which one you should start with. This *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Bonnie Mentzer:

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information these days can get by anyone on everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider any time those information which is within the former life are challenging to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the particular resource are convinced. If you get the unstable resource then you get it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take *Monster* (Alex Delaware, No. 13) as

the daily resource information.

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