



Flesh and Bone

Jefferson Bass

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Anthropologist Dr. Bill Brockton founded Tennessee's world-famous Body Farm—a small piece of land where corpses are left to decay in order to gain important forensic information. Now, in the wake of a shocking crime in nearby Chattanooga, he's called upon by Jess Carter—the rising star of the state's medical examiners—to help her unravel a murderous puzzle. But after re-creating the death scene at the Body Farm, Brockton discovers his career, reputation, and life are in dire jeopardy when a second, unexplained corpse appears in the grisly setting.

Accused of a horrific crime—transformed overnight from a respected professor to a hated and feared pariah—Bill Brockton will need every ounce of his formidable forensic skills to escape the ingeniously woven net that's tightening around him . . . and to prove the seemingly impossible: his own innocence.

Flesh and Bone Details

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From Reader Review Flesh and Bone for online ebook

Nikki Nielsen says

I never read the back of a book before I start the book itself. This is one time that I wish I would have. After finishing the book I was so sorry to tell the characters goodbye that I went on to read 'About the Author' and learned that Jefferson Bass is actually a writing team. The 'Jefferson' of the team is Jon Jefferson, a journalist who also wrote and produced National Geographic's documentaries on the Body Farm. The 'Bass' of the team is Dr. Bill Bass, the University of Tennessee's professor and world-renowned forensic anthropologist that founded the Body Farm and is the inspiration for the main character, Dr. Bill Brockton. I love their collaborative writing style and the fact that these characters are really walking around UT campus and the Body Farm makes me love this all the more! Great mystery.

Rob says

Number 2 in the Body farm series.

I really enjoyed this book, finding it hard to put down.

The amazing thing about this series is that Body Farm is very real. They do place cadavers into certain situations and watch, very closely, the rotting process. It seems that this helps greatly with the police forensic investigation.

Dr. Bill Brockton, the man who's brain child the body farm and is, is currently re-staging the brutal murder of a young male. This re-staging is at the behest of the local M.E., Dr. Jess Carter.

For sometime now Bill and Jess have been forming a relationship that is a bit more than just professional. Just when their relationship seems to be taking off, tragedy strikes. When one morning Bill turns up to work to find Jess's mutilated corpse attached, in a grotesque parody of the sex act, to the cadaver that they have been working with. The police are informed and much to Bills shock and disbelief he becomes their number one suspect.

Bill is formally charged with murder but is released on bail whilst awaiting his trial.

As the police believe they have their man no one is looking for the real killer. Bill has no other recourse but to find the killer himself.

This is a tense, at times, dark, fast paced thriller. On top of all that it's also very informative, albeit somewhat gruesome.

I wanted to give this book 5 stars but opted for 4 as I thought the end was a bit too contrived.

Highly recommended.

Sherry Fundin says

The body farm is easy to imagine because I watch Bones, the TV show.

I love Jessamine Carter, the ME for Chattanooga, currently filling in for Knoxville as well. She drives a red Carrera, that fits her personality and allows her to cut travel time off her commute.

“Do men really believe that’s what six inches looks like? Try three and a half.”

Humor and death do go hand in hand, don’t they?

Dr. Brockton, is a forensic anthropologist and professor at the University of Tennessee and stages bodies at the body farm for research. I found myself chuckling at the writing even though the scenes were gruesome.

Jess and the doc are an item. She takes charge of that too. The banter between them is is humorous, snarky and fun, the teasing laced with sexual innuendo. They are complex characters and Jefferson Bass does a great job of bringing them to life. I must warn you though, he isn’t afraid to kill off his characters, so be careful who you become attached to.

Oops...didn’t see that coming. Now the real investigation begins. The details of deciphering clues, step by step, are stories I love to read about.

The writing is not as heavy and dark as some of the thrillers I have read, but it does raise a serious question for me. Why do we feel that by refusing to talk to the police, without a lawyer present, automatically makes us guilty. Just because you’re innocent, doesn’t mean the justice system will find that. Sometimes, instead of using clues to find the answer, they assume the answer and look for clues to make the pieces fit. I watch enough True Crime, and the crime TV shows to know this. That makes it easy for me to relate to what is coming down and it truly pisses me off.

Tragedy, love, sacrifice, revenge, anger and rage. Complex and fully developed characters allow me to sympathize and empathize with them, hoping they will find the answers they are looking for.

I didn’t see the ending happening the way it did, but I loved the dramatic flourish. Full of all the details for a great murder mystery with some thrills and suspense thrown in, along with characters to die for.

Talk about being close to your work, be sure and check out the bio of this fantastic writing duo.

I voluntarily reviewed a free copy of *Flesh and Bone* by Jefferson Bass.

Anne Hawn Smith says

I felt that this book was better than the first one. I found it hard to put down even though I had a pretty good idea who the murderer was. It was a little harder to figure out who was framing Bill Brockton. The forensic details are a little gruesome, but they are handled pretty well.

This would be an excellent book if it wasn't for the diatribe against anyone who believes in creationism or intelligent design. I found it to be an intolerant and even bigoted. There are noted scientists who believe in intelligent design and to characterize anyone who doesn't believe what these authors believe as being delusional is uncalled for in a work of fiction. Actually, it is uncalled for in any venue. Unfortunately, this really spoiled the book for me. I, however, did not pitch the book in the trash unfinished...being more tolerant of someone who has a different opinion from mine than the authors.

I thought the characters were more developed, especially DeVries. The plot was pretty good if a little predictable. There were, however, several twists I didn't see coming.

Neeuqrazil says

I thought I had written a review of this one. Apparently my mind is playing tricks on me.

This was the second Jefferson Bass book that I've read, and I really enjoyed it. The reveal at the end came as a surprise to me (although it probably shouldn't have done.) But the characters were interesting, and well-fleshed-out, the story was engrossing, and I think I might have even stayed up way too late one night finishing it.

I'm looking forward to reading the next one.

Spuddie says

#2 in the Body Farm mysteries featuring Dr. Bill Brockton, founder of the research institute dedicated to learning more about how we decompose. In the first book, I enjoyed the forensic parts but was not crazy about the main character, and that trend continued in this book. For all that Dr. Bill Brockton is the consummate “nice guy,” I just can’t get attached to him, nor do I really care much about him—even when he’s suspected of murder. He’s just boring milquetoast for me. But I **did** enjoy the forensic aspect of the book a lot—if not for that, it’s doubtful I would have continued reading it. Lots of gory details, so if you’re squeamish, I wouldn’t read this book.

Bill gets embroiled in the creationism/intelligent design vs. evolution debate in this book as well as working on the murder of a guy dressed in women’s clothes that appears to be a hate crime. When a colleague of Bill’s—whom he just happens to have slept with also—ends up murdered and displayed in his own Body Farm on top of the body they’re using to research that hate crime murder, he is a strong suspect in the case. Can’t see why, when ‘whodunit’ was as plain as the nose on your face, at least to me.

I’m debating whether to continue on in this series or not. The whole package just seems really uninspired, great forensic details or no. One of those, “It wasn’t really bad...it was okay, BUT”...kind of books.

Alondra says

4 Stars

Started off with a simple murder, and it quickly became something else entirely. A twist that I did not see coming, ugh! :(

Sherry says

The forensic anthropology was more interesting than the character. I ran out of patience with the clumsily-devised protagonist. The ineptness of the 60-ish fellow, thrown into dating by the death of his wife, is not

cute, just tiresome. His grandchildren run screaming when he knocks on the door because they saw on the news that he was a murderer. I mean, really. And there is some silliness about his being trans-phobic, and then inexplicably Miss Georgia Youngblood becomes his bosom buddy. Character development and interpersonal relationship description is just not subtle or nuanced.

Lauren says

The mystery part of this book was excellent. The science was interesting and a bit gross (much takes place at the Body Farm), it followed a good progression and didn't make any fantastical leaps. But there was an agenda in this book that made it feel preachy.

There is a whole subplot regarding creation/evolution that has nothing to do with the mystery. This would be fine except that the way it is presented is highly insulting and disrespectful. Every time this issue is brought up in the book it is presented in a "you must be the dumbest, most uneducated individual in the world to possibly believe in creation" kind of way. My experience has been that there are some brilliant scientists that believe in creation. I have also asked a respected science professor point-blank, "if all evidence pointed to a creator, would science then determine that creation occurred?" His reply was that they would keep looking. That may not represent all scientists but it is certainly what was portrayed in this novel.

As far as the writing, the dialogue was wierd to me. I know writing as people actually talk is challenging and that was certainly the case in the dialogue of *Flesh and Bone*. Whenever there was an exchange it made me uncomfortable because of the awkwardness of it.

Li'l Owl says

Flesh and Bone is the second book in the *Body Farm* series and it was just as brilliant as the first one!

Dr. Bill Brockton and his college and friend, Dr. Jess Carter, are restaging the death scene of a murder victim in order to narrow down the man's time of death, thus assisting authorities in their investigations into the killing. At the renowned research facility in Knoxville Tennessee, known as the Body Farm, Bill and Jess are using a donated body fitting the victim's stats, height, weight, etc., then duplicating the victim's wounds and positioning the body the way it was found, right down to the gory details. The decomposition of the body will now be monitored and recorded to determine when the murder was most likely to have taken place, thus narrowing down the suspect pool.

Dr. Carter is also filling in as Medical Examiner as the current ME, Dr. Garland Hamilton, is under review by the board of medical examiners relating to an autopsy in which he concluded incorrectly that a man died from a stab wound to the chest, nearly sending an innocent man to life in prison for a murder he didn't commit. Now Garland Hamilton's competence and reputation as a medical examiner are being thoroughly investigated by the board. Further, it was Dr. Brockton's re-examination of the victim's body that uncovered the botched autopsy findings and incorrect conclusion that resulted in Dr. Hamilton being investigated in the first place.

As Bill and Jess continue working close together their feelings for each other begin to grow. Jess is recovering from a bitter divorce and Bill is now starting to find love for the first time since his wife died of cancer two and a half years before. Both are discovering renewed happiness a perhaps a bond that could be very good for each of them.

When Bill finds Jess dead, tied to the tree with the decomposing body of the staged murder victim, at the Body Farm he suddenly finds himself being accused of her murder. Worse still he has to hire the best defense attorney in Knoxville, Burt DeVress. The lawyer has been nicknamed 'Grease' due to his representation of some the most unsavory criminals, often times getting them off scott free. He's been notoriously brutal during cross examinations of Dr. Brockton in many a trial and he's left a bad taste in Bill's mouth on numerous occasions. Still, if he is to avoid being found guilty and spending the rest of his life behind bars or on death row he needs the best defense lawyer available. And that's Grease.

Now, charged with murder, he's been asked to take a leave of absence from his anthropology class at Tennessee University, his two grandson's ages five and seven are terrified of him, and he can't go home as reporters are camped on his lawn.

But the biggest questions remain.

Who would want Jess dead? And why?

This is one of my favorite series and I'm enjoying them even more the second time around. If you love forensic detail there is no better place to find it. The characters are vivid, genuine, and authentic and I became attached to them very early on. The groundbreaking forensic science is fascinating, detailed, and is definitely capable of giving you the willies! Which is a good thing! There are numerous twists that caught me by unsuspecting! All the intensity is tempered just a bit by the close friendship and easy joking banter among the characters that occurs throughout the book which I find fresh and original.

The anticipation is relentless from beginning to end and the pages practically turn themselves! The end of the story comes complete with a surprising twist and a shocking conclusion.

It's easy to read in one sitting.

I highly recommend the *Body Farm* series!

*Most enjoyable when read in order.

Karel says

A step down from the first with a meandering plot that went nowhere fast.

What annoyed me into a review is that halfway into the book, there's a heavy handed creationism vs. evolution debate. I'm as atheist as any other atheist, I reckon, but I found it tasteless - with the creationists being portrayed as morons and the MC representing the Voice of Evolution. Whether this - the fact that creationists are generally morons - is true or not, it's still very obviously inserted into a plot that has no place for it. Suffice to say that if I wanted a hearty brouhaha at the creationists' expense, I would go to Dawkins, not a mystery novel.

Then there's the transgender character, written as such a stereotype that stereotypes worldwide are cringing, as well as the uncomfortable suggestion of a connection between being gay and being a pedophile and well...

A bad book just got seriously bad.

Matt says

Jefferson Bass return with their second explosive novel, equally as exciting as the first and full of teaching moments, as well as a well-laid plot and great character advancement. Not only is the reader treated to a great mystery (or two), but we learn a great deal more about physical anthropology and the environs of Eastern Tennessee. Although the book can get a little technical, it is not above the threshold of most readers and does entertain some interesting ideas/debates that remain prevalent in society. While the end does tie up a little too nicely in a few pages, the entertainment value and fluidity of the story should make it an instant success.

With some experience reading this genre (a strong admirer of Kathy Reichs), I can draw some parallels to the presentation of forensic anthropologists as main characters. Bass does, as Reichs is known to do, present not only the facts, but some of the interesting back story, letting the reader learn as they read. Some may prefer to divorce learning from their fiction reading but it is not an inculcation of a point of view, but rather a means of permitting the layman to better understand what is going on. It is never a bad thing to leave a book with a little more knowledge of the subject is it?

Great work Messers. Jefferson and Bass. I am very much a fan and will keep reading, as long as you keep writing.

Ellen says

Flesh and Bone by Jefferson Bass.

This is the 2nd in the body farm mystery series and my 9th. Unfortunately I didn't read this series in order. Please don't make that same mistake.

Dr. Bill Brockton is working with Jess Carter the state's ME on establishing the identity of a murder victim found tied to a tree. The shocking display of the victim has everyone on the case working long and exhausting hours. The toll becomes apparent on Jess who is fast becoming Dr. Bill's paramour.

Then the unthinkable occurs and the bottom empties out of bill Brockton's life. The few friends staying by his side he can count on one hand if that.

This was an excellent read/mystery. The beginning of the relationship between Dr. Bill and Jess had me a bit frustrated but then the story goes in a completely unthought of direction. Don't miss out on this exciting and educational series.

Kristen says

So far, and admittedly, I am only about 5 chapters in, this is about 180 degrees in term of gore that the first of the series. I don't know if the editors patted the authors on the heads and said, "Nice first book, but you

know what sells? EXTREME GORE." The first book focused on science, and on suspense and atmosphere. This second book is so disgusting that I might not be able to finish it. If we don't get past the preliminary scene of crime parts pretty soon, I'm moving on.

Edit: Man, this book was... grim. Not for me. I got through half, and am counting it "read," but moving on to the next in the series, which hopefully will be less gratuitously gory.

My other complaints about this book mirror those of other reviewers. The evolution vs. creationism theme that runs through it is immensely heavy-handed and downright condescending in places, almost sneering at the reader. I found that device to be unnecessary and annoying. The rest of the subject matter, namely dealing with gender and transvestite issues, was handled clumsily, and made me cringe.

I liked the first book in this series so much that I have high hopes for the third book.

Bryan457 says

Anthropologist Dr. Bill Brockton, founder of Tennessee's world-famous Body Farm for forensic studies, is accused of murder.

I enjoyed this story.

I took off one star because the author engaged in one of the things I find most irritating in a work of entertainment, he got on his soapbox and ridiculed other people's cherished beliefs.

In here there is a scene where Dr. Brockton lectures his college class on how ridiculous it is to believe in creation, and that all the evidence points to evolution. He picks on two "poorly designed" biological characteristics of the human body, too many teeth for our small mouths and weak abdominal wall at the belly button resulting in hernias, as evidence of evolution not design.

My understanding is that a person starts with an underlying BELIEF about whether supernatural phenomenon such as Biblical miracles like creation, a worldwide flood, or resurrection from the dead are real and true or not. If you do not believe that these supernatural events are possible then you must interpret the evidence you find in science by naturalistic methods such as evolution. But, if you believe in these supernatural events then you have no problem with the Biblical record of events and may interpret the evidence in that light. So, as an example, where Dr. Brockton interprets too many teeth for our too small mouths through his naturalistic filter he sees it as evidence that we evolved. A person who interprets the same evidence through a supernatural filter and matches it against the Biblical record will see evidence that the Bible is correct that man was created perfect and then degenerated (same explanation for the weak abdominal wall). So in effect each of these two would be INTERPRETING the same evidence in a different way according to their underlying belief system, and the logic of each would be internally consistent with their own beliefs. So, in effect both are being logical and I don't see that there is any reason for either of them to ridicule the other as being stupid or illogical.

And that is way too much thinking for a book that is supposed to be entertainment.
