



Perish

Lisa Black

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Bestselling author Lisa Black takes readers on a nailbiting journey to the dark side of justice as forensic expert Maggie Gardner discovers troubling new details about her colleague Jack Renner, a homicide detective with a brutal approach to law and order . . .

The scene of the crime is lavish but gruesome. In a luxurious mansion on the outskirts of Cleveland, a woman's body lies gutted in a pool of blood on the marble floor. The victim is Joanna Moorehouse, founder of Sterling Financial. The killer could be any one of her associates.

Maggie knows that to crack the case, she and Jack will have to infiltrate the cutthroat world of high-stakes finance. But the offices of Sterling Financial seethe with potential suspects, every employee hellbent on making a killing. When another officer uncovers disturbing evidence in a series of unrelated murders, the investigation takes a surprising detour.

Only Maggie recognizes the blood-soaked handiwork of a killer who has committed the most heinous of crimes—and will continue killing until he is stopped. Burdened with unbearable secrets, Maggie must make an agonizing choice, while her conscience keeps telling her: she's next.

Perish Details

Date : Published January 30th 2018 by Kensington

ISBN :

Author : Lisa Black

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Crime

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From Reader Review Perish for online ebook

Darlene says

This being the third in the Maggie and Jack series is good continuation of the series. Jack and Maggie share a secret that would destroy both of them if the secret is every told. Maggie's conscience brings her to the verge of confessing at times, but so far she stops herself. I really am enjoying this series, but this book went a little too in depth in describing loan companies, mortgage companies, defaults, subprimes, etc. It was hard for me to follow and comprehend all the explanations on those topics. But the story itself was very good.

Donna says

Joanna Moorehouse, wealthy CEO of a financial firm, is viciously murdered and forensic specialist Maggie Gardiner and Detective Jack Renner are called to the bloody scene. As more women are gutted, Maggie tries to follow the evidence to determine how the killer departs without leaving bloody footprints and why these women are even opening their doors to the killer.

I liked the gathering of forensic evidence and the mystery of the killer was a good one. The amount of detail given about the financial industry totally overwhelmed the rest of the story. I majored in finance in college but my eyes were glazing over at this amount of information. I was very interested in the crimes and analysis of the scenes but really bogged down in between.

Carol Custer says

I like this author and was glad to see the characters of Maggie and Jack back. I have mixed feelings about this book though overall I liked it. The mystery part was good with lots of suspects and a surprising twist at the end. It's always interesting to me to hear about Maggie's work - something not often seen in books. The downfall of this book - to me - was the neverending details about banking, mortgages, and crooked lenders. A little of this description goes a long way - - but here, I learned more about these subjects than I wanted to know. I think many readers might give up on the snoozefest aspects of the book and that would be a shame because the underlying mystery is good.

Joyce says

4 and 1 / 2 stars

Forensic expert and photographer Maggie Gardiner is called to photograph the scene of a horrific murder. The victim was Joanna Moorehouse. She lived in a palatial home in Cleveland alone. The home was bare of even the minimum of "homey" touches. Joanna was the founder of Sterling Financial. Her partner for this case is the sometimes brutal homicide detective Jack Renner.

Sterling Financial is a loan originator that specializes in sub-prime loans. They were involved in tricking

unsuspecting senior citizens, immigrants and the poor into signing up for adjustable rate mortgages without benefit of explaining just what they were in for in a fluctuating market.

Apparently, Sterling Financial was discussing a merger with another company at the time of Joanna's murder. Her boyfriend Jeremy Mearan pooh-pooed the significance of the interference of a regulatory commission into the proceedings. Was the murderer the boyfriend? One of her associates at the firm? Or someone else altogether?

With such a cutthroat business, detectives Renner and his partner Riley decide to interview the co-workers first. Picketing at the business is another potential suspect, so they interview him as well. After interviewing everyone, including the Federal Reserve representative, Riley and Renner had to conclude that they had nothing at all on why or who might have killed Joanna,

Tyra Simmons, the in-house attorney for Sterling Financial is murdered next and in the same manner as Joanna Moorehouse. While investigating Joanna, they learn that she had a somewhat questionable past. Joanna's sister Jessica shows up at the house while the detectives are there and proceeds to announce that the home is hers and doesn't seem all that upset at the loss of her sister.

Suddenly, one of the protestors, Kurt Resnick, comes and confesses to Joanna's murder. He claims that Joanna killed his wife. The wife committed suicide. The two women have nothing in common. Who would want to kill them both? Again, the murderer left no clues behind.

The detectives learn that the default rate of the loans is much higher than reported to the company that is interested in buying Sterling. They decide to question the man who works at the rating agency. They wonder if he is getting kickbacks or something.

The Federal regulator who was working at Sterling, Anna Hernandez is the third woman to die in the same horrible manner as the previous two. Jeremy Mearan again found the body. He was taking a copy of the manual used to train new employees to her. It is a truly explosive document. He says Joanna wrote it. Is this why the three women were killed? Because of the training manual? Three dead women in three days, and the police are at a loss. They have plenty of suspects, but no evidence.

Through good police work, the killer finally emerges. It was a surprise, but his twisted reason for the killings made a sort of sense – sort of.

Ms. Black gives a very good accounting of the mortgage banking collapse and the whole situation behind it. I worked for one of the very big companies for several years before the collapse, and Ms. Black is right on with her descriptions. I couldn't have described it better myself. This book is very well written and plotted. The suspense begins immediately in this novel, and continues throughout the book. It describes the sometimes tedious process of a police investigation succinctly. I truly enjoy the Gardiner/Renner novels and will continue to read them for as long as Ms. Black continues to write them.

I want to thank NetGalley and Kensington for forwarding to me a copy of this great book to read and enjoy.

Maureen Carden says

How can someone kill, actually eviscerate a body and not leave any blood evidence? This is the scene in the cold, lavish mansion of Joanna Morehouse, owner of Sterling Financial. No bloody footprints, no smears on doorknobs, no blood in the drain. Nothing but a single bloody partial print which isn't producing any results from AFIS. This is what confronts Cleveland Forensic Specialist Maggie Gardiner. Confronting her detective counterparts, Renner and Riley are the multitude of the masses in the way of suspects.

The license to print money is once again returning to financing the housing market, and Sterling Financial seems to be a leader in shady practices. The money and a possible sale, is garnering exceptional levels of hatred from many of Joanna's co-workers. Oh yeah, lets not forget the protesters outside the doors who can hate with the best, but for much better reasons.

Very soon after Renner and Riley begin to formulate a narrative other murders occur, bringing them back almost to the beginning.

Maggie Gardiner and Jack Renner continue to work very well together while continuing their tenuous dance of death. Each had the power to destroy the other, but Jack Renner holds the upper hand, or seems to. Two previous books detail their past working relationship. I will leave it to Perish, not this review to explain their dance macabre.

There are two other threads weaving their way through this book, one a problem where Jack provides the solution, the other problem where the solution is Renner himself. In a moment of careless speech he might have given Maggie's ex-husband, Det. Rick Gardiner, the means to solve for X. So I will be looking forward to book four.

After the first murder, I will admit to skimming the other descriptions of the eviscerated bodies. That's how good Lisa Black is with her writing and descriptive powers. Her skills aren't just limited to blood and guts. I felt every shard of glass in Maggie's arm, every cold mausoleum of a room of the Morehouse mansion, and every moment of grief.

Maybe they were better developed in the previous books, but I just really couldn't get a good feel for either Jack or Maggie. I could barely provide a description of them. Even working with one them durn new-fangled(sic)computer programs.

I think I might be in the minority when I say how much I enjoyed Lisa Black's clear explanation of the financial meltdowns from ten years ago. She made a very difficult subject easier to understand with a soupçon of warning for "déjà vu all over again."

This was a terrific police procedural without any artificial twists or turns. The leads are all there, it just takes a dangerously long time for the detectives to get there; and the readers.

Thanks to NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Susan says

Maggie and Jack are back with their unlikely truce. This time searching for a murderer of three women from the same company. Lots of mortgage talk which made my eyes glaze over a bit and quite often. I really like how Maggie and Jack's uneasy relationship is progressing. Well written with a mystery that will keep you scratching your head. I look forward to more Gardiner & Renner mysteries!

** ARC provided my NetGalley for an honest review

Reen says

This is book 3 of the Gardiner and Renner series. Maggie Gardiner is a forensic expert and Jack Renner is a

homicide detective. Both of them hold a dark secret that no one else but them knows and if the secrets were revealed their lives would be forever changed. They are called to investigate the murder and evisceration of Joanna Moorehouse, owner and head of Sterling Financial. There is no evidence but a single partial print, no blood smears, DNA or any other evidence. Their investigation into Sterling Financial reveals the firm's predatory mortgage lending practices and an off-shore account. Sterling is also about to be bought out by another firm. Did someone within the company kill her or did she betray one too many customers? This story had great writing and created more tension and mystery as the story evolved. While I appreciated the author's dedication to researching all aspects of the lending market and its role in the financial crisis of 2008, the level of detailed information did become tedious after a while. Character development was good and Gardner and Renner work well together. Black's Moorehouse character is unlikeable at best, a victim you really don't feel sorry for. The ending was also not what I expected. This was my first book by this author and I would definitely read more of this series. Thank you to Net Galley and the author for an ARC of the novel.

Adrian Dooley says

Really like this series and this one, the third in the series, is an excellent addition.

We are back with our duo, forensic expert Maggie Gardner and homicide detective Jack Renner.

Here Maggie is called to a murder scene in the front room of a mansion where a young woman has been brutally murdered, stabbed and hacked to death. There are no clues at the crime scene, no DNA, no sign of a break in, but they soon discover the woman is Joanna Moorehouse, founder of Sterling financial. As Jack and Maggie contact and visit Sterling they enter the world of shady financial dealings and realize that any number of Joanna's associates could be the killer. As they delve deeper, they find out all about Sterling and its dodgy dealings in the mortgage market, a potential merger with a much bigger player and huge sums of money missing.

When a near identical murder takes place soon after, they realize that they have very few leads to follow and have to get to the bottom of all Sterlings dealings to hopefully come up with a suspect for the murders.

I really enjoyed this one. I really like Lisa Black's writing style. You get the impression that she does huge research on her books before putting pen to paper and they are detail heavy. Maggie and Jack are a great pair with plenty of tension between them due to their past and the secrets they both hold (a constant story arc throughout the series).

The investigations rely more on a structured approach of investigating the leads, ruling them out and moving on to the next one, rather than perhaps the thrills and spills of other novels. This is in no way a criticism and in fact is a breath of fresh air. It somehow makes the stories and investigations feel more realistic. The reading is excellent throughout. I can imagine the fine details of the financial world and all the abbreviations may irritate some readers after a while (I did lose track of what was what occasionally) but I didn't mind it at all and again gave it that authentic feeling.

The ending for me was a little weak and felt a little rushed, perhaps my only real criticism of the book. It didn't stop me from enjoying the book immensely though and I look forward to and will be keeping an eye out for the next addition in the series.

Thanks to NetGalley, Kensington Books and Lisa Black for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

William Richardson says

Book 3 in this series and it was fast paced with gruesome murders and learned something about mortgage loan companies and how they can screw people out of money and their homes preying most of the time on elderly people. This gave me a good idea of how companies like this caused the market crash around 2009. A very good read can't wait for next book.

Amy says

This story starts out when the head of a mortgage firm is brutally murdered in her own home, and since said business is in the process of merging with another business and the feds are involved . . . there is a long list of suspects to choose from.

I don't have much of an interest in business and mortgages, subprime, etc, but I was fascinated by how dirty this business can truly get. These minute details well explained why someone would want to murder Joanna Moorehouse, as well as others tied to Sterling Financial.

Also, I really like how the "relationship" between Maggie and Jack is developing. I cannot wait for the next book in this series!

Carrie says

Perish by Lisa Black is the third book in the Gardiner and Renner series. The series are crime thriller reads featuring forensic expert Maggie Gardner and homicide detective Jack Renner. Each book in the series is a new crime/murder to solve for the duo and can be read as standalones but there is an ongoing story line in the character development that carries over from book to book so it's best to read the series from the beginning for full understanding.

While Perish wasn't my favorite of the series so far it was still a very solid read and addition to the series. The book begins with Maggie at a crime scene of the brutal murder of Joanna Moorehouse, the founder of Sterling Financial. The case leads to investigating everyone in Joanna's life to find her killer as the investigators follow the clues from one lead to the next.

Really the only thing bringing my rating down a bit with this installment of the series was I felt it tended to get a bit weighted down with the financial details of the story. With the murder victim coming from that background the investigation leads to a lot of digging into the financial industry which could get a touch boring here and there to me personally.

As usual though it sounded like the author had her facts straight in those details as it does with the details of investigating such a brutal crime giving the book a realistic feel. I will definitely continue to be interest in continuing the series or other books by this author in the future.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress.com>...

Melody Morris says

Perish – Lisa Black

I received this novel as an ARC, in exchange for an objective review. This is book 3 in a three-part series, and I have not (yet) read the other two. First off, I'd suggest reading them in their proper order. As a reader new to the characters, it became readily apparent that I'd missed some significant details, reveals, and interactions between these characters in the prior novels. However, if read as a stand-alone, the missing details are implied and become clearer as the story progresses.

Maggie Gardiner is a forensic scientist who works for the Cleveland PD. Jack Renner is a homicide detective, whom Maggie works closely with, as they investigate crime scenes. However, only known to Maggie, (presumably due to the events of the prior novels) is the fact that Jack has some "Dexter-like" qualities, which he utilizes on occasion to ensure that the proper suspect is stopped however necessary.

As this story unfolds, Maggie & Jack are called to an apparent homicide in a wealthy district in town. As the investigation unfolds, their victim is discovered to be the owner of a less than honest financial company, specializing in predatory loans, complete with falsified paperwork and creative bookkeeping. When a second woman from the office is found killed in a similar fashion, the investigation shifts to those who have lost homes or have expressed outrage and vengeance towards the company. When a third victim is discovered, also with a link to the company - but as an investigator of the company itself - the detectives are stymied as to who might have anything to gain by the killings. As the investigation continues, Maggie finds herself in the crosshairs of a killer – but is it an unknown entity – or someone close to her wanting to preserve her silence???

I struggled a bit with the first third of the book, as I am not financially minded at all, and much of the 'set-up' of the story had to do with explanations of mortgage lending, CDO's, predatory lending, variable rates, etc. While I found that to be a bit dry, I also learned a lot, and plan to try to learn some more. (The author also includes a list of her references in the acknowledgements.) Once those explanations are made (to the detectives) which sets up motive for the investigation, I could not put the book down.

A good read, and I will be reading the two prior books as well to gain more insight into this duo!!

Lori L (She Treads Softly) says

Perish by Lisa Black is a highly recommended police procedural/thriller and the third in the series featuring forensic expert Maggie Gardiner and homicide detective Jack Renner.

Joanna Moorehouse, owner and founder of Sterling Financial, is found brutally murdered in her mansion on the outskirts of Cleveland. Her body is found stabbed and gutted on the marble floors in the living room. The pristine home shows no blood trail, no fingerprints, no trace of the killer's ingress or egress from the murder

scene. It also contains few clues to any personal life of Moorehouse. Is the brutal murder due to a hatred of Moorehouse, or does it have something to do with her business? And what about her overseas bank account containing an unbelievably high balance?

While Maggie is struggling with the lack of trace evidence, Detectives Jack Renner and Thomas Riley are doing their best to investigate the murder, and it appears that corrupt practices might have something to do with it. Moorehouse's employees at Sterling Financial are all business. None of the staff were friends or interacted socially with Moorehouse. The one exception might be Jeremy Mearan, who was sleeping with her. There other suspects at Sterling itself, a crooked predatory mortgage lender where everyone is out to make huge bonuses while ignoring the group of protestors outside the building. Sterling is also about to be bought out by another company, so tension is running high at the business.

When another woman is murdered in the identical way, it becomes clear that more is going on than Maggie or the detectives realize. They need to find out why these women were murdered and who would benefit from their demise. It might be tied into the complicated and suspect practices of subprime lending and the anticipated resulting credit default by consumers, but would that be a reason to kill?

Perish features the excellent writing that I expect from Black. The plot flows smoothly; the descriptions are perfectly captured. The tension mounts incrementally as the investigation proceeds and more information is uncovered and clues are followed. Admittedly, the financial information does become a wee-bit tiring after a while, but it also provides an education on why the mortgage lending crisis of 2008 occurred and a solid basis for the investigation.

Readers of the series will know the history of Maggie Gardiner and Jack Renner. Although their background isn't completely explained here, new readers are provided with enough information to understand that there is a backstory, and comprehend the significance of their actions, and the quandary both characters face. It does mean that they will not appear to be quite as well-developed as characters if this is your introduction to them. (I felt the same starting with the second book, Unpunished, but this time I knew some of the backstory and felt more comfortable with the characters.) The investigation is solid, however, and that will please new and old fans of the series. I'm looking forward to the next novel featuring Gardiner and Renner, Suffer the Children, as clues in this one point to some major developments.

Disclosure: My review copy was courtesy of Kensington Publishing via Netgalley.
<http://www.shetreadssoftly.com/2018/0...>

Linda says

Could not finish. Too slow moving and weighted with too many details about mortgages and the housing market. I found myself skipping too many pages.

Linda Strong says

Maggie Gardiner, Forensic expert, and Jack Renner, Homicide Detective each have a deep dark secret that no one knows except each other. These secrets, if uncovered, could cost each of them their jobs or their very

lives.

This is the 3rd of a series. While this one does well as a stand alone, I would highly recommend starting with THAT DARKNESS and then UNPUNISHED. There are spoilers in this book that would damage the reading pleasure of this wonderful series.

Maggie is called to process the murder scene of the founder of Sterling Financial. Joann Moorehouse was brutally murdered. There were no clues, no DNA, no motive

Until the detectives start looking into the victim's background. Not very well liked at work, there are multiple suspects ... and as they say ... everyone lies.

Maggie and Jack know that the killings have only started ... more bodies will fall.

The author certainly did her research in this one. I now know more about loans and mortgages and high finance than I ever knew before. Money is the root of all evil ..is this the motive for these killings?

As always with this author, the book is well-written with stand-out characters. Secondary characters such as Jack's partner, Riley, and Maggie's ex-husband, Rick, also a homicide detective lend credibility to the story. The suspense drew me in starting with the first page and the unexpected ending left me totally surprised.

I am looking forward to the next chapter of their lives in SUFFER THE CHILDREN, due to be published August 2018.

Many thanks to the author / Kensington Books / Netgalley for the advanced digital copy. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.
