

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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A HARD DEATH

By

Jonathan Hayes



“This is a CinemaScope novel, in technicolor and surround sound: bloody murders, hot sex, decadence, incest, drug cartels, and a surging SWAT team. It’s set forth in a controlled prose that rewards the reader with lovely writerish touches. The hero exercised “until the sweat showered off him.” A sleeping drunk vibrates with “throat-plowing snores.” The novel’s hyped-up action works because there’s a strong emotional core. . . . an action finale . . . provides a cleansing end to a story of a depravity that both chills and fascinates.”

—*Booklist*

“VERDICT: Even though this is the second entry in a series, new readers can enjoy it as a stand-alone. Fans of forensic thrillers by Kathy Reichs, Patricia Cornwell, and Jeff Lindsay will also delight in this book.”

—*Library Journal*

“Disgraced forensic pathologist Dr. Edward Jenner hoped that a move to Florida would be a distraction from the serial killer horrors in *Precious Blood*, but In Hayes’ solid sequel, the medical examiner finds himself embroiled in another life and death investigation . . . Jenner emerges as a sufficiently flawed yet empathetic hero.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“In Hayes’ entertaining sequel to *Precious Blood* (2007), forensic pathologist Dr. Edward Jenner feels the sharp edge of an old adage, the one about no good deed going unpunished. . . . the oh-so-likable Jenner is redemptive, proving once again he can shine with those other stars in the forensic galaxy.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Hayes shows us the darker side of the Sunshine State with Edward Jenner’s next adventure. His portrait of a small Florida town is excellent; he conveys the class divide and an undercurrent of rot and corruption expertly. The action is nonstop, the atmosphere tense and the blood-soaked finale will leave you breathless.”

—*Romantic Times Book Review Magazine*, ******Four Stars**

“Hayes has written his character as a fractured soul with the heart of a hero. The character comes to life, and when attacked it becomes personal, as if he is our own family or friend. The depiction of who he is resonates. His friends and coworkers become our friends and coworkers. When danger and death occur, we are mortified, sad and disheartened. The pathology, done with an eye to the nonprofessional is laid out for easy perusal. Jenner is brilliant. Move over Kay Scarpetta; there is a new pathologist in town. . . . If you enjoy thrillers this is a first class read. Jonathan Hayes has found the perfect pace to keep the reader involved from the first page to the last.

Make time, for you will not want to put it down.”

—*Blogcritics.org*

Fans of **Jonathan Hayes**, the NYC gastronome, forensic scientist, and author of the acclaimed debut thriller *Precious Blood* have been patiently waiting for his follow-up **A HARD DEATH** (**Harper/HarperCollins Publishers; Hardcover; ISBN 13: 9780061691768; \$24.99/\$32.99 Can.;** **Hardcover; on-sale: 2/12/2011**), featuring his forensic pathologist Edward Jenner. And those who have heard him speak at the various mystery and thriller conventions over the past two years, from Bouchercon, Thrillerfest, Left Coast Crime, to literary festivals from the Brooklyn Book Festival to the Miami Book Fair, will be even more pleased to find out that this one is just as scary, and just as good.

Jonathan Hayes writes what he knows. After graduating with honors in medicine from the University of London, he trained in pathology at Boston University and in forensics in Miami. He brings a tremendous amount of knowledge to his fiction writing, and his command of detail is astonishing. He takes readers through the process of examining a crime scene—not just the sounds, sights, and smells, but also the urgent challenges, frustrations, and satisfactions of sifting through critical evidence to put the pieces of a killing together. The colors are incredibly rich; the circumstances compelling, yet grounded in hard science. He did this with great success with *Precious Blood*, and a reading of **A HARD DEATH** is no less a visceral experience.

A HARD DEATH opens with Jenner having survived the horrific ordeal of the Inquisitor serial killings in New York, but not the political fall-out. His medical license suspended, Jenner finds himself banished to Douglas County in coastal Florida, and settles in to work as a Medical Examiner in the balmy seaside resort of Port Fontaine.

But nothing in Douglas County is as it seems. First, Jenner discovers the bodies of a man and woman in a car sunk in a canal; later, an anonymous call in the middle of the night leads Jenner to the grisly scene of a mass execution in the Everglades. The closer he looks, the more Jenner finds traces of a shadowy criminal conspiracy; he soon learns that he can trust no one.

With his life on the line, Jenner refuses to walk away and let the killers get away with murder. The result is pure Florida noir, an explosive, edge-of-the-seat forensic thriller in the great tradition of Patricia Cornwell and Kathy Reichs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

The son of a pathologist father and a Broadway actress mother, **Jonathan Hayes** was born in Bristol, England. After medical school in London, he moved to the U.S., studying pathology in Boston and training in forensics at the Dade County Medical Examiner's Office in Miami, ultimately moving to New York where he has served since 1990 as a forensic pathologist in the Manhattan Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the City of New York. On a daily basis, he performs autopsies, teaches forensics to medical students, cops and lawyers and testifies in murder trials. Since 1993, he has held a teaching appointment at the New York University School of Medicine. He lectures internationally on violent death investigation, and has a particular interest in drug-related and asphyxial deaths. His sideline as a freelance journalist was launched with an article on *Silence of the Lambs* for *Premiere*. In the mid-1990's *Paper Magazine* hired him to write *A Higher State of Consciousness*, his column on the music and culture of the rave and nightclub scene. He found himself writing more about food for the magazine, and was soon spotted by editors at *Food & Wine* magazine; his food writing quickly gained an enthusiastic following, and his work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *GQ*, *Gourmet*, *The New York Observer*, *Salon.com*, *MTV.com*, and *Gastronomica*. He became a contributing editor at *Martha Stewart Living*, but has stepped back from magazine writing following the international success of **PRECIOUS BLOOD**. Articulate and witty, he's appeared on numerous radio shows across the country, and has been featured in National Public Radio's "All Things Considered's" special segment "You Must Read This". He is the author of the debut novel **PRECIOUS BLOOD**, and its sequel **A HARD DEATH**. For more on Jonathan Hayes and his writing, visit his blog: www.jonathanhayes.com. You can follow him on Twitter @PreciousHayes, and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/jonathan.hayes>.

A Hard Death

By Jonathan Hayes

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A LONG ROAD TO A HARD DEATH

By Jonathan Hayes, MD

At the time I decided on a career in forensic pathology, Miami was the best place to learn. I took a one-year position as an Associate Medical Examiner for Dade County, and moved to South Miami Beach, then a crumbling Art Deco novelty neighborhood still in the early stages of gentrification. I bought Teach Yourself Spanish tapes and a little black Mazda, filling the trunk with the booming bass speakers pretty much obligatory in South Florida in those days.

My time in Miami was the most intense year of a life that has not lacked for intensity. It was the twilight of the Cocaine Cowboys, and every night brought a fresh wave of brutal and bizarre drug-fueled killings. Between the heat and the neon and the blood, my life felt like one long, delirious acid trip. I'd find myself driving back from a crime scene in the middle of the Everglades at 4AM, my car throbbing with overcranked Miami Bass; when I'd finally reach South Beach, there'd be models in bikinis rollerblading down the middle of Ocean Drive, blasted on cocaine.

I learned a lot very quickly. Once I had enough experience, I spent time moonlighting as a medical examiner in the seaside resort of Naples, on Florida's western coast. The town was tranquil and genteel, a stark contrast to the exotic frenzy of life and death in Miami. In Naples, most of the citizens passed peacefully in their sleep – homicides were blissfully rare.

My early days there felt almost bucolic – just what one would expect from a county that at the time could get by comfortably with just one medical examiner. I'd do the occasional autopsy in the mornings, then wander the few blocks from the morgue to the beach. In my downtime, my main recreational highlights were a steady diet of 7-11 Slurpee's and battered Travis McGee novels.

But one week, things changed abruptly, and I found myself dealing with real forensic cases. I had to travel by airboat to the site of a small aircraft crash in the heart of the Glades. And the next day I was called to Immokalee to investigate a stabbing.

Immokalee is a small town in the farm country north of Naples, and houses a shifting population of agricultural workers, among them many migrants. At the time, it was dirt poor; it's improved

a good deal since then, but the town still has its problems – in the 2000 census, some 40% of the population was living under the poverty line.

I was struck by how different life was for the migrant workers of Immokalee, by the difference between their lives and the affluence and comfort of well-heeled life in Naples. In New York City, where I live, rich and poor live cheek-by-jowl, but in Collier County in 1990, it felt like a distinct and striking separation – almost a segregation of two tribes.

The memory of Naples, with its manicured lawns, its country clubs and high end malls, its retirees and its peaceful deaths, stayed with me, as did Immokalee, with its hardscrabble lifestyle of back-breaking field labor and its near-monopoly on the county's homicides. The tension between ordinary locals, rich Snowbirds and disadvantaged migrant workers seemed the perfect backdrop for the next Jenner story.

I'm going to avoid discussing some of the other elements of the story for fear of spoiling some of its twists, but anyone who reads the newspapers will recognize the criminal depravity and violence I present in **A HARD DEATH** as all too real. A particularly sordid Village Voice profile of a prominent Florida family led me to yet another disturbing narrative thread.

I still love visiting Naples. Collier County's Chief Medical Examiner is one of my closest friends; whenever I'm there, I'm astonished by how much the town has changed since my days at the office. **A HARD DEATH** is in no way a depiction of life in Naples and Collier County – Port Fontaine is *not* Naples, but an imaginary place inspired by my memories as a still fairly naïve death investigator.

A HARD DEATH is dark Florida noir, its storyline torn howling from news reports of the most ruthless excesses of American crime. It's an edgy, twisted ride, with bad women, and worse men. Bad people do bad things. People get hurt. People die.

And no one – rich or poor, immigrant or local – is left unscathed.

PRAISE FOR JONATHAN HAYES' NOVEL

PRECIOUS BLOOD

“A nail-biting masterpiece . . .”
—*USA Today*

“First-time novelist Jonathan Hayes seems poised to claim a solid reputation in the subgenre of forensics crime fiction with his well-plotted "Precious Blood." A New York City pathologist for more than 20 years, Hayes puts the focus on character and plot while melding in enough crime scene detection to give his novel authenticity and validity. While at times those grisly behind-the-scenes forensics details play an important role in "Precious Blood," Hayes' real triumph is his careful focus on the fragile emotional state and recovery of his hero. "Precious Blood" is a dark, hard-boiled procedural that soars.”

—*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*

“Hayes fills his story with interesting forensic details . . . and a compelling hero, . . . Precious Blood is a promising debut, representing an interesting new voice in the genre.”

—*Chicago Sun-Times*

"Hayes spares no punches or cuts as he pits his flawed hero against a madman holding all the torture devices. Not only is Jenner's life and livelihood on the line, someone he cares for may soon turn into the next martyr. Set against a scarred Big Apple backdrop, Precious Blood plays for keeps with pupil-dilating suspense, horrific slice-'em-ups, and a battered doc who makes CSI: New York look like Pee Wee's Playhouse."

—*Madison County Herald (MS)*

“. . . balances the horror with humanity. . . Joined by a network of savvy cops and one brave young woman, Jenner races to a climax that's both overly dramatic and totally satisfying. The novel is enriched by the author's insider knowledge. Hayes has been a New York City medical examiner for 17 years, and it pays off in the book's gritty realism.”

—*Cleveland Plain Dealer*

“Hayes's experience as a New York City medical examiner adds dimension to this thriller. . . . What makes this story stand out is the nicely detailed forensic work. Fans of *CSI* and the like would definitely like this one. Recommended for most public libraries.”

—*Library Journal*

“Hayes makes an impressive debut pitting a former medical examiner’s considerable wits against a diabolical serial killer. The murders are grisly and striking, and Jenner is a likable lead (somewhat reminiscent of Jeffery Deaver’s Lincoln Rhyme). . . . Jenner seems an able hero to carry a series.”

—*Romantic Times BookClub, ****4 stars*

“Hayes’ own gift for storytelling is apparent in the thriller Precious Blood.”

—*Paper Magazine*

“With acute attention to detail, the story is graphic and compelling as well as horrifying. . . . This story is filled with such detail and attention to the surroundings that Mr. Hayes has the ability to make you feel as if you are witnessing the very thing he describes. A gift not all authors can get across through words alone. His characters are so defined that one would hope to see them return in another book. Let's hope that Jonathan Hayes plans just that.”

—*MyShelf.com*

“In his first outing, Hayes successfully introduces a new protagonist to the ever expanding field of the forensic mystery in a well-told story that holds much promise. . . . this is a chilling and exciting read that will no doubt leave most readers eager for more.”

—*NewMysteryReader.com*

“. . . a gripping and gory chiller, reminiscent of Jeffery Deaver's Lincoln Rhyme series . . . Hayes does an excellent job of sharing the killer's mindset with the reader - and giving him a credible, though horrific, background.”

—*Bookloons.com*

“PRECIOUS BLOOD is a brilliant debut that delivers all one can ask for in a great read: an intelligent thriller that takes you down the meanest streets, peopled by complex characters, pacing that doesn’t let up until you’ve turned the last page, and dialogue that crackles and cuts to the bone. Forensic pathologist Jonathan Hayes brings his authentic voice—and a fascinating protagonist—to the crime novel. The autopsy report leaves no question of causation: this reader was scared to death.”

— **Linda Fairstein**

“Taut and chilling... a fast-paced thriller written by a real player in the game of forensic sleuthing.”

— **Kathy Reichs, author of the bestseller BONES TO ASHES**

EVENTS FOR JONATHAN HAYES & *A HARD DEATH*

SATURDAY APRIL 9TH, 2011 – EASTON, CT

Murder 203 Connecticut’s Mystery Festival—10:00 AM and 3:00 PM

@ Easton Public Library

*Mystery convention with panels & signing

691 Morehouse Road

Easton, CT 06612

<http://www.murder203.com/schedule.html>

SUNDAY APRIL 10TH, 2011 – EASTON, CT

Murder 203 Connecticut’s Mystery Festival—10:00 AM

@ Easton Public Library

*Mystery convention with panels & signing

691 Morehouse Road

Easton, CT 06612

<http://www.murder203.com/schedule.html>

WEDNESDAY APRIL 13TH, 2011 – NEW YORK, NY

NYPL—6:30 PM

@Mid-Manhattan Library

*Mystery panel event with Alafair Burke, Linda Fairstein

@ Easton Public Library

40th Street & 5th Avenue

New York, NY 10016

Books sold by the Mysterious Bookshop

http://www.mwa-ny.org/pdf_2011/2011_April_13_FromAutopsyRoomTCOourtroom.pdf

WEDNESDAY APRIL 13TH, 2011 – NEW YORK, NY

Barnes and Noble Tribeca—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

97 Warren Street

New York, NY 10007
Main Phone: 212-587-5389

THURSDAY APRIL 28TH, 2011 – WALTHAM, MA

Back Pages Books—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

289 Moody Street

Waltham, MA 02453

Main Phone: 781-209-0631

<http://www.backpagesbooks.com/event/2011/04/28/day>

SATURDAY MAY 7TH, 2011 – SEATTLE, WA

Elliott Bay Book Company—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

1521 Tenth Avenue

Seattle, WA 98122

Main Phone: 206-624-6600 x119

<http://www.elliottbaybook.com/>

MONDAY MAY 9TH, 2011 – SEATTLE, WA

Village Books —7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

1200 11th Street

Bellingham, WA 98225

Main Phone: 360-733-1599

<http://www.villagebooks.com/>

TUESDAY MAY 10TH, 2011 – PORTLAND, OR

Powell's Bookstore—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

3415 SW Cedar Hills Blvd

Portland, OR 97005

<http://www.powells.com/>

THURSDAY MAY 12TH, 2011 – SAN FRANCISCO, CA

M is for Mystery and More—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

86 E. Third Avenue

San Mateo, CA 94401

Main Phone: 650-401-8077

<http://www.mformystery.com/>

SATURDAY MAY 14TH, 2011 – SAN DIEGO, CA

Mysterious Galaxy—1:00 PM

*Spotlight author, birthday bash

7051 Clairemont Mesa Blvd

San Diego, CA 92111

Main Phone: 858-268-4747
<http://www.mystgalaxy.com/>

TUESDAY MAY 17TH, 2011 – PHOENIX, AZ

Poisoned Pen Bookstore—7:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

4014 N Goldwater Blvd

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Main Phone: 480-947-2974

<http://www.poisonedpen.com/>

SATURDAY MAY 21ST, 2011 – NAPLES, FL

Barnes and Noble—2:00 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

5377 Tamiami Trail N

Naples, FL 34108

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Main Phone: 239-597-2040

THURSDAY MAY 26TH, 2011 – NEW YORK, NY

Chappaqua Library—7:30 PM

*Reading, discussion, and signing

195 S. Greeley Avenue

Chappaqua, NY 10514

www.chappaqualibrary.org