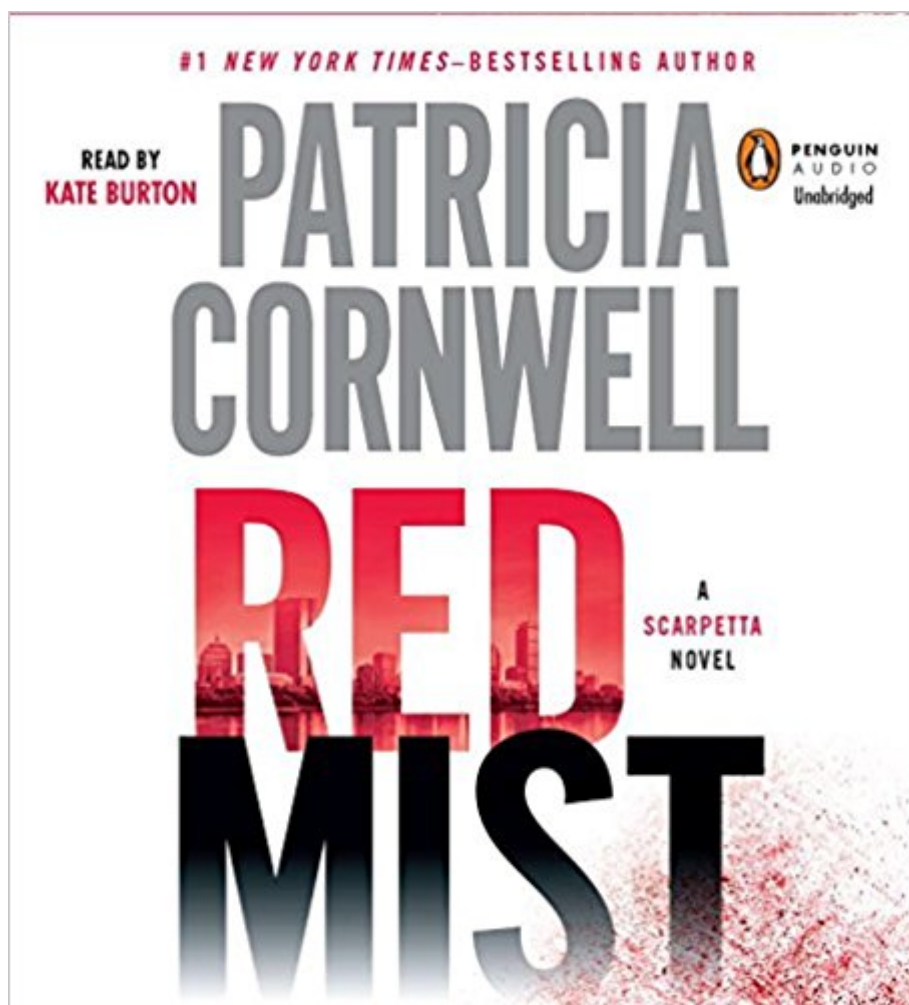




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# Red Mist: Scarpetta (Book 19) (A Scarpetta Novel)



## Synopsis

Unabridged, 11 CDs, 12 1/2 hours  
Read by Kate Burton  
The new Kay Scarpetta novel from the world's #1 bestselling crime writer.

## Book Information

Series: A Scarpetta Novel (Book 19)

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 978 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,284,433 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in [Books > Books on CD](#)  
> [Authors, A-Z](#) > ( C ) > [Cornwell, Patricia](#) #1311 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense](#) >  
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## Customer Reviews

“When it comes to the forensic sciences, nobody can touch Cornwell.”  
The New York Times Book Review  
“Cornwell has created a character so real, so compelling, so driven that this reader has to remind herself regularly that Scarpetta is just a product of an author’s imagination.”  
USA Today  
“Scarpetta is one of the most believable characters in crime fiction.”  
The Vancouver Sun --This text refers to an alternate Audio CD edition.

Patricia Cornwell was born on June 9, 1956, in Miami, Florida, and grew up in Montreat, North Carolina. Following graduation from Davidson College in 1979, she began working at the Charlotte Observer, rapidly advancing from listing television programs to writing feature articles to covering the police beat. She won an investigative reporting award from the North Carolina Press Association for a series of articles on prostitution and crime in downtown Charlotte. Her award-winning biography of Ruth Bell Graham, *A Time for Remembering*, was published in 1983. From 1984 to 1990 she worked as a technical writer and a computer analyst at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Richmond, Virginia. Her first crime novel, *Postmortem*, was published by

Scribner's in 1990. Initially rejected by seven major publishing houses, it became the first novel to win the Edgar, Creasey, Anthony, and Macavity awards as well as the French Prix du Roman d'Aventure in a single year. In *Postmortem*, Cornwell introduced Dr. Kay Scarpetta as the intrepid Chief Medical Examiner of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 1999, Dr. Scarpetta herself won the Sherlock Award for best detective created by an American author. Following the success of her first novel, Cornwell has written a series of bestsellers featuring Kay Scarpetta, her detective sidekick Pete Marino, and her brilliant and unpredictable niece, Lucy Farinelli: *Body of Evidence* (1991), *All That Remains* (1992), *Cruel and Unusual* (1993) [which won Britain's prestigious Gold Dagger Award for the year's best crime novel], *The Body Farm* (1994), *From Potter's Field* (1995), *Cause of Death* (1996), *Unnatural Exposure* (1997), *Point of Origin* (1998), *Black Notice* (1999), *The Last Precinct* (2000), *Blow Fly* (2003), *Trace* (2004), *Predator* (2005), *Book of the Dead* (2007) [which won the 2008 Galaxy British Book Awards' Books Direct Crime Thriller of the year; she is the first American ever to win this award], *Scarpetta* (2008), and *The Scarpetta Factor* (2009). In addition to the Scarpetta novels, she has written three best-selling novels featuring Andy Brazil: *Hornet's Nest* (1996), *Southern Cross* (1998), and *Isle of Dogs* (2001); two cook books: *Scarpetta's Winter Table* (1998) and *Food to Die For* (2001); and a children's book: *Life's Little Fable* (1999). In 1997, she updated *A Time for Remembering*, and it was reissued as *Ruth, A Portrait: The Story of Ruth Bell Graham*. Intrigued by Scotland Yard's John Grieve's observation that no one had ever tried to use modern forensic evidence to solve the murders committed by Jack the Ripper, Cornwell began her own investigation of the serial killer's crimes. In *Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper - Case Closed* (2002), she narrates her discovery of compelling evidence to indict the famous artist Walter Sickert as the Ripper. In January 2006, the *New York Times Magazine* began a 15-week serialization of *At Risk*, featuring Massachusetts State Police investigator Win Garano and his boss, District Attorney Monique Lamont. Its sequel, *The Front*, was serialized in the *London Times* in the spring of 2008. Both novellas were subsequently published as books and promptly optioned for adaptation by Lifetime Television Network, starring Daniel Sunjata and Andie MacDowell. In April 2009, Fox acquired the film rights to the Scarpetta novels, featuring Angelina Jolie as Dr. Kay Scarpetta. Cornwell herself wrote and co-produced the movie *ATF* for ABC. Often interviewed on national television as a forensic consultant, Cornwell is a founder of the Virginia Institute of Forensic Science and Medicine; a founding member of the National Forensic Academy; a member of the Advisory Board for the Forensic Sciences Training Program at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner,

NYC; and a member of the Harvard-affiliated McLean Hospital's National Council, where she is an advocate for psychiatric research. She is also well known for her philanthropic contributions to animal rescue and criminal justice as well as endowing college scholarships and promoting the cause of literacy on the national scene. Some of her projects include the establishment of an ICU at Cornell's Animal Hospital, the archaeological excavation of Jamestown, and the scientific study of the Confederacy's submarine H.L. Hunley. Most recently she donated a million dollars to Harvard's Fogg Museum to establish a chair in inorganic science. Her books are translated into thirty-six languages across more than fifty countries, and she is regarded as one of the major international best-selling authors. Her novels are praised for their meticulous research and an insistence on accuracy in every detail, especially in forensic medicine and police procedures. She is so committed to verisimilitude that, among other accomplishments, she became a helicopter pilot and a certified scuba diver and qualified for a motorcycle license because she was writing about characters who were doing these things. "It is important to me to live in the world I write about," she often says. "If I want a character to do or know something, I want to do or know the same thing."

Unlike other readers, I did not find the book boring at all. I guess TV programs like CSI here, there, & everywhere have made this type of mystery too slow for some folks. What I did like about the book is a return to somewhat normal relationships & personalities for the regular cast. Kay's insecurities & the food are back, but Kay is not overly neurotic as in the last several books. Benton is a little flat, but is coming back as husband/FBI profiler. Marino is back to being a friend, rough & grouchy, but protective & part of the family. Lucy is way less psycho & seems to have regressed to the little girl computer whiz of the earlier books (which is actually refreshing considering what a far out nut she had become). OK, not the best book but it gives me hope that Cornwell is moving in the right direction & future books will be more like the earlier ones where the plots were believable, the main characters were sympathetic, & there were no soap opera antics like Benton's return from the dead to slay a vampire-like character a few books ago. This book gives me hope that Cornwell will do better & keep us supplied with some more good Scarpetta novels in the future.

the first novels in this series were interesting and fairly plausible. This latest one has very little plot and is overloaded with office politics as well as vast amounts of dull and mawkish personal musings attributed to the title character. One wonders why in every novel Scarpetta is about to get fired ... the BIG THREAT ... and by the end of the book ends up wishing that it would happen and put us all

... character and author and re-reading public out of our shared misery. No more of these for me ... even scrubbing out the barbecue would be more interesting

I am a fan of Cornwell but this book was a disappointment. Way too much rambling and not enough action. The plot was interesting but I found myself skipping over the story just get to the end. This is not a page turner by any stretch. The way her husband and niece are treated - like strangers that were in the way - did not sit well. Something was missing in this book.

The first four-fifths of this book could be the best Scarpetta novel in a long time. There is a single, coherent plot. There are relatively few minor characters. There is real mystery about what happened. The procedural parts of the book get back to the medical examiner material that Cornwell knows so well. The writing is tight and we do not have to spend too much time with Lucy and Marino. The Georgia Medical Examiner is particularly endearing. Cornwell can write. Then there are the last twenty pages, where Cornwell rushes to finish the book as soon as possible by telling us everything that Scarpetta figured out in a moment of inspiration. In first year writing class, we are told, "Show, not tell." This is a terrible example of "tell, not show." Cornwell could have usefully dropped about 100 pages from the first four-fifths of the book (particularly the parts where she is beating up on herself for various imaginary sins) and added about 100 working to solve the mystery. Have her interview the suspects. Have her go to the scenes of the crimes and the suspicious locations. Have the police and the FBI actually find some clues. Have Lucy actually go through some of her sneaky information-gathering processes. Throw in a few discoveries from California and Massachusetts bit by bit. Build a little suspense, rather than relate Scarpetta's paranoid worries. Put her in some real jeopardy. Cornwell was never particularly good at writing action. Her strengths were character, procedure, and atmosphere. But at some point, a mystery writer needs not only to create a mystery, but to solve it. This mystery is solved more or less by a *deus ex machina*. We don't know how she did it. It is almost as if she wrote much of a good book first, did not know what to do with it, and attached her outline to the end of the book in lieu of a solution.

I've found that the last 8 books of Cornwell's to be lessons in erudition and poetry rather than the earlier books which were faster paced with action occurring over a week or several months. This book, like the last few, have tended to rely on a 24 hour period and a great deal of introspective stream of consciousness which prevents this novel from fitting into the usual hard hitting crime genre. Characters are not invested in the story and in fact we're not really aware of what's going on

until a fifth of the novel has passed. The story is predictable and as usual, we're treated to Cornwell's obsession with wealth and beauty in her houses: I don't want to read yet another chapter detailing the stylish stained glass windows, the "commercial, stainless steel appliances and travertine stone with alabaster and amber chandeliers". It's like a catalogue from an expensive Italianate boutique rather than a crime novel. Lastly, the woman herself never seems real and rarely has any vices. Unlike other more interesting characters who eat fast food at the last minute and wear mis-matched socks, Scarpetta is an amalgam of seeming perfection, her only problem that of occasionally looking after her niece "too much" and worrying about the ever-present stereotypical NY city cop, Marino complaining that "Marino won't respect himself" if he follows through on his "need to be with me" and if not "he'll be angry, depressed and emasculated." Every character is affected by Scarpetta, physically and emotionally. Without her and her directorship of the CFC, her involvement with Harvard and other institutions as well as the Defence Dept (covering every possible venue as well as CNN), the world would cease to exist. She is indispensable. This book, like her others isn't injected with a shred of humour. The funny side of life simply doesn't exist for Scarpetta or for Cornwell

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