



The Violated

Bill Pronzini

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A new stand-alone thriller by an acclaimed master of the genre and author of the Nameless Detective series.

Bill Pronzini is crime-writing royalty. His more than eighty published novels have won or been nominated for Edgar, Hammett, Anthony, Shamus, and Macavity awards—a clean sweep of the crime fiction award field—along with rave reviews from critics. He crafts masterful stories, often from multiple perspectives, in which the human condition is on full display.

The Violated is no exception. In Echo Park, in the small town of Santa Rita, California, the mutilated body of Martin Torrey is found by two passersby. A registered sex offender, Torrey has been a suspect in a string of recent rapes, and instant suspicion for his murder falls on the relatives and friends of the women attacked. Police chief Griffin Kells and detective Robert Ortiz are under increasing pressure from the public and from a mayor demanding results in a case that has no easy solution. Pronzini cleverly unfolds the case through alternating perspectives—Martin Torrey's wife, caught between her grief and the fear her husband was guilty; the outraged husbands of the women violated; the enterprising editor of the local paper; the mayor concerned most with his own ratings; the detectives, often spinning in circles—until a surprising break leads to a completely unexpected conclusion. The Violated is Bill Pronzini at the height of his storytelling powers.

The Violated Details

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Author : Bill Pronzini

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From Reader Review The Violated for online ebook

Tim says

Seldom have I been as disappointed in an end as with this story, easily costing 2 stars. 1 of 10 stars

Tony says

THE VIOLATED. (2017). Bill Pronzini. **1/2.

Bill Pronzini, the author of the acclaimed series of detective novels featuring “The Nameless Detective,” also has an impressive number of stand-alone novels under his belt. This latest one just doesn’t measure up to his normal performance. The first flaw in the work is the sheer number of characters. I still try and write down the names and descriptions of major characters as I read along in a book to help me keep them straight. I soon found that by page 50 or so I had a list of 15 characters who were all to play a major role in the plot. Even after having written them all down, I was still flipping back and forth to help me remember who they all were. After a while, the exercise became mind-numbing, and spoiled most of any enjoyment I might have gotten out of the story. If you are a die-hard fan like me, you will still read Pronzini’s works. If you are new to Pronzini, this would not be the best book to use as an introduction. The basic plot involves a serial rapist in a small Northern California town. He suddenly turns up dead in a local park, shot in a way to imply that this killing was a matter of revenge for his acts. Of course, there was not enough proof to put this suspect behind bars, but that didn’t matter to members of the community and to the spouses and close friends of the victims. This is a plot of vengeance that you likely have seen before, though Pronzini covers it better than most. It is just not up to his capability.

Ben Boulden says

Santa Rita is a small town with a big city problem: a serial rapist is working its streets. When the prime suspect, Martin Torrey, is murdered—a bullet to the back of his head and two postmortem shots to his groin—the police’s rape investigation is derailed by what appears to be a vigilante murder. Martin’s death is good news for most of Santa Rita’s residents, even his wife feels some guilty relief, and the investigation seems to be going nowhere fast as the embattled Sheriff, Griffin Kells, tries to solve the rapes—there was never enough evidence to charge Torrey—and the murder both.

With THE VIOLATED, Bill Pronzini uses a progressive, and difficult to pull off, story-telling technique; each character, both major and minor, speak in first person narration from chapter to chapter. It gives the story an emotional power, from the stress and anxiety the investigating officers feel to the raw fear and rage of the victims, that would otherwise be impossible to capture. It slows the story’s pace, which, since the novel is a character-driven police procedural, is less critical than it would be with a plot-driven, action-oriented novel. A soulless mayor with political ambitions and a meth dealer add enough intrigue to keep everything moving until the final climactic twist.

Valerie says

This novel by Bill Pronzini, is a standalone novel about the murder of a convicted sex offender who had undergone psychiatric treatment for voyeurism in Ohio. After time in a mental hospital, his doctors declared him cured, and so he moves to California to live with his wife. Unfortunately, Martin Torrey, broke the law by not registering as a sex offender when he moved to California. In the small city where he lives with his wife, four brutal rapes occur, and many people are convinced Torrey is the culprit, although there is no proof. And then, Torrey is found murdered shot through the head and genitalia. The story is told by the principal characters in the story, and the reader learns several details from the perspectives of his wife, victims, law enforcement officers assigned to the case, and the mayor and a journalist. I thought the book was well written and to be honest, I was very surprised at the ending. This was a very engrossing and interesting story.

Bill says

I won an advanced reader's copy of "The Violated" by Bill Pronzini, on Goodreads.com and am posting an honest review. I gave it a rating of 4 stars.

In *The Violated*, Pronzini does a superb job of describing the vast emotional toll inflicted upon all the people associated with four women attacked by a serial rapist in a small city. The story is told in brief chapters, each one voiced by one person, including the four victims, family members, police officers, the city mayor, the newspaper owner, even the wife of the man accused of being the rapist. When that man, Martin Torrey, is found brutally murdered, pressure mounts on the police to find the killer, and ascertain whether or not Torrey was the rapist. Surprise developments ratchet up the tension, leading to an unexpected conclusion.

Pronzini is able to capture the mindset of the character speaking in each chapter, brilliantly expressing that person's thoughts and emotions, so that the story flows along smoothly, without a hitch. That's much harder to do than having only one character tell the whole story. Just another reason why he received a Grand Master Award from the Mystery Writers of America. This is the first book I've read by Pronzini, and it leaves me eager to explore more of his work.

Geoff. Lamb says

Bill Pronzini is justly famous for his Nameless Detective series. Each of those stories (those that I have read, perhaps 20+) are well-plotted and exude atmosphere. *The Violated* (not part of the ND series) does not (to me) rise to that level. The story is told through the voices of several people, with no central narrator. With the exception of police chief and one of the victims (Eileen), the individual voices were stilted, mannered, which may well be what the author was after. And, for this reader, the solution to the mystery did not feel right. In all, a good story from a prominent writer.

Eileen Nichols says

Well I finished it. That's about all to say. While the story was somewhat interesting and I liked the multiple

perspectives, the writing was at times juvenile. "my boyfriend is a stud" the kids name was Timmy, etc. not the best or worst I've read.

Thomas Brusio says

Bill Pronzini detours from his usual Nameless Detective series and hits another home run with this gripping new standalone, "The Violated."

The story opens with the body of what appears to be Martin Torrey, the serial rapist, who has been hunting women and killing them for pleasure. Santa Rita Police Department Officers Leo Malatesta and John Jablonski interview the two young men who were at the scene, walking through Echo Park on their way home.

Torrey is lying face up in a grassy riverbed, three gunshot wounds to his body, two decimating the genital region, and a bullet through the head. Officers Malatesta and Jablonski further examine the body until the county coroner and Lieutenant Ortiz arrive at the scene.

Unsure if the victim was really the serial rapist Martin Torrey, people of Santa Rita are warned by the local law enforcement not to go outdoors after dark. When another woman is brutally raped in her apartment late at night and lives to tell her story, the citizens of Santa Rita are in an uproar about the latest shocking events, and a new nightmare begins for the tight-knit California town.

Told from various points of view, everyone has something to contribute to the perplexing case. "The Violated" is a slow burning, complicated and entertaining standalone thriller written by one of the best mystery writers in the crime fiction genre.

Karen says

I've probably said this before, but Bill Pronzini is my favorite mystery writer. his books are always tightly plotted, the action and narrative beautifully woven into an interesting and intriguing story.

First of all, this is not one of his Nameless Detective books, which have always been mystery gold. The Violated is a stand-alone mystery, following a cast of characters in Santa Rita, California through their lives and thoughts as they deal with the terror of a serial rapist and the murder of the prime suspect.

We learn of the mayor's issues with the Police Chief, and the detective lieutenant, and his desire to replace them. We read about the local newspaper's owner and editor who supports these lawmen and his constant battle with the mayor. And, we follow the thoughts and actions of the rapist's victims and their families, as they struggle to gain some measure of healing.

So for Chief Kells and Detective Ortiz, the job is to find the murderer of their suspect, solve the original crimes, and deal with the issues this activity stirs up in their town.

Once again Pronzini has crafted a well-turned crime novel that is worth your time and mine. He is truly a master of his craft.

Lesa says

Bill Pronzini's standalone, *The Violated*, is pitch-perfect. The crime story is told from multiple viewpoints, but the story flows easily from one voice to the next. Sometimes, that could be confusing, difficult to follow, and it might throw off a reader. Not with this story. It's the perfect way to demonstrate how crime destroys a community, person by person.

When two young boys find a body in Echo Park in Santa Rita, California, many of the townspeople view it as the end of a crime spree. Martin Torrey was a registered sex offender, and a suspect in the violent rape of four women in town. Police Chief Griffin Kells and Detective Robert Ortiz have been working the case for months, with no evidence to arrest Torrey. Now, someone has taken justice into their own hands and killed the man suspected by the entire community. Ortiz had suspected Torrey from the very beginning. Kells had his doubts.

Now, Kells and Ortiz have a murder investigation. Although they face pressure from the mayor and others in town to call Torrey the rapist, and close the case, they're determined to find the correct answer, using their limited resources. And, most people in Santa Rita hope the murder solved the rape cases. Even so, the community is angry and uneasy. The two police officers, the mayor, the owner of the newspaper, the rapist's victims, the dead man's wife and her sister all have opportunities to tell their stories. But, the tragedies haven't ended in Santa Rita.

The Violated is a powerful novel revealing the ripples that spread from crime. How many lives are affected? How many people are destroyed? Pronzini allows the people of Santa Rita to share their perspectives, and the number of ways they've been hurt.

Mystery Writers of America named Bill Pronzini a Grand Master. *The Violated* is just one more reason why he deserves it.

Kathleen says

Bill Pronzini is the author who kindled my interest in modern crime fiction. His long running series about the Nameless Detective is getting a little long in the tooth so I was pleased to see that he had written another stand alone novel. Presenting multiple points of view is often attempted by writers but not as often successful. Pronzini takes us inside the minds of all the people violated by a rapist in this small town in Northern California. We meet the victims, their families, the law officers and even the posturing politicians. Each chapter is headed with the name of a different character and this is not confusing because the story is linear and easy to follow. Thankfully Pronzini avoids the common literary trope of italicizing the perpetrator's thoughts in short chapters and therefore does not subject us to his sick meanderings and justifications.

I was particularly impressed by Pronzini's ability to get inside the minds of the rape victims and show the different ways this crime affects women and how difficult it is to recover mentally even as the body heals physically. Solving the crime almost takes a backseat to the emotional toll that these crimes have on this town. This is not a perfect book but I would recommend it to any of my friends who enjoy a good modern

crime novel that doesn't dwell on graphic violence.

Gloria Feit says

From the publisher: The novel begins with the body of a dead man lying “face up on the grassy riverbank, legs together and ankles crossed, arms spread-eagled above his head with palms upturned and fingers curled, in a grotesque parody of the crucifixion.” The victim, Martin Torrey, according to public opinion, is not a victim but instead the lead suspect in an on-going investigation of four brutal rapes and assaults against four women taken place in the span of four months, each one more violent than the last. Tasked with solving the rapes and finding the murderer of Martin Torrey, chief Griffin Kells and detective Robert Ortiz are placed under increasing pressure from the public at large and from an over-ambitious Mayor. As a result, everyone is a suspect. As the story unfolds, readers find themselves in a guessing game trying to deduce who did it? Was it one of the rape victims or was it one of their friends or family member? Told in multiple perspectives, everyone is a suspect. Everyone had opportunity, and everyone had motive, even Martin’s widowed wife.

The author of more than eighty novels, this most recent standalone from Mr. Pronzini is right up there with the best of them. The p.o.v. changes from chapter to chapter, e.g., Chapter I of Part I is told in first person by Liane Torrey, the wife and now widow of the murdered man, the next chapter by the police chief Kells (only the 2nd homicide during his seven-year tenure as chief), the next by the politically ambitious Mayor Hugh Delahunt, the next by Ione Spivey, one of the rapist’s victims, and on and on - - I must say that each was conspicuously in the believable voice of the speaker, not an easy task!

There had been four assaults in four months, “despite increased police patrols, stepped-up neighborhood watches, public warnings to women not to go out alone at night and to take security precautions when home by themselves. And each one committed without leaving a single solid clue to his identity.” The cops obviously have their work cut out for them, their job made that much harder with the firestorm of negative media coverage seeking to oust the chief.

A subplot concerns Robert Ortiz, who admittedly has “no difficulty commanding men, but no aptitude for administrative duties and little for public relations, and I do not suffer fools well,” whose Hispanic heritage does not help his “goal is to become a high-ranking detective with the state police or the police department of one of the larger cities.”

The multiple p.o.v. chapters include other victims and their spouses, each one entirely true to their characters (as I’ve already mentioned), and the case becomes dramatically more difficult with another attack, making it rather obvious that the dead man was surely not the man responsible for the first four. The entire tale takes place in just over a week, the suspense rising as the hunt for the attacker/murderer goes on. An excellent addition to this author’s oeuvre, it is highly recommended.

Harvey says

Excellent use of multiple POV to tell this story of a community faced with a serial rapist and murder.

The rape victims and their families, the mayor, and law enforcement are all impacted in different ways.

Another fine story from Grand Master Pronzini.

SnoopyDoo's Book Reviews says

This book was okay. Just okay not great but also not bad.

As mentioned in the blurb it touches in the subject of rape so that may be a trigger to some readers.

This book also has multiple POV which I thought was great for this book and story.

The story was entertaining and kept me guessing while I was sitting on the edge of my chair.

The characters were good but some of them seemed a bit immature, which kind of took away from the overall thriller of the story.

While most of the book was entertaining, some of it was a bit predictable and others a bit too drawn out, which can slow it down. The overall pacing of the book was okay.

Overall I thought it was good and something you can enjoy if you like thrillers

I rate it 3 ★

BOOKLOVER10 says

An unidentified man has viciously attacked four women in Santa Rita, California. The perpetrator is still at large and there are few promising leads. Consequently, the self-serving mayor, Hugh Delahunt, believes that this provides a golden opportunity to appoint one of his allies to replace Chief of Police Griffin Kells.

Subsequently, a local resident, Martin Torrey—who failed to register as a convicted sex offender when he moved from Ohio to California—is found dead. Although there is no proof that Torrey was the rapist, could his killer be a vigilante who dispensed his own brand of justice?

Bill Pronzini's "The Violated" is an engrossing police procedural that presents a well-rounded, intimate, and heartbreaking portrait of how sexual assault damages the psyches of victims and devastates their families. The author also conveys the desperation of investigators—who are under intense pressure from politicians, the media and frightened local citizens—to solve this difficult case. As long as Santa Rita's female residents do not feel safe, life cannot proceed as usual.

Pronzini's spare, understated prose; engrossing narration by a variety of well-drawn characters; and carefully crafted dialogue demonstrate that this grandmaster of crime fiction has not lost his touch. The suspenseful and engrossing plot culminates in an unexpected and unsettling conclusion. "The Violated" focuses on the ways in which despair, loneliness, miscommunication, and anger destroy relationships, rob individuals of self-esteem, and shatter their dreams for the future. Another central theme is that even those closest to us are capable of concealing their true nature. Human beings are, ultimately, unpredictable and unfathomable.
