



The Burning: A Maeve Kerrigan Crime Novel (Maeve Kerrigan Novels Book 1)

By Jane Casey

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A determined young police constable goes it alone against an enigmatic killer and her bosses in a series debut for fans of Sophie Hannah and Tana French

The Burning Man. It's the name the media has given a brutal murderer who has beaten four young women to death before setting their bodies ablaze in secluded areas of London's parks. And now there's a fifth.

Maeve Kerrigan is an ambitious detective constable, keen to make her mark on the murder task force. Her male colleagues believe Maeve's empathy makes her weak, but the more she learns about the latest victim, Rebecca Haworth, from her grieving friends and family, the more determined Maeve becomes to bring her murderer to justice. But how do you catch a killer no one has seen when so much of the evidence has gone up in smoke?

Maeve's frenetic hunt for a killer in Jane Casey's gripping series debut will entrance even the most jaded suspense readers.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"Astute, complex, layered - and very twisted. You'll remember this one for a long time" Lee Child "The number of convincing police officers in crime fiction is a tiny squad but Maeve has the potential to be one of the few female members" Daily Telegraph "Casey rarely puts a foot wrong in this enthralling example of a bait-and-switch novel...Parallel first-person narratives from either side of the thin blue line contribute hugely to the novel's page-turning quality, although the author's success here is largely due to her superb characterisations. The Burning confirms that she's a talent to watch." Irish Times "November 2010 Book of the Month. This is the new psychological thriller from the acclaimed author of The Missing. It's gripping and utterly compulsive, leaving you gasping for breath as you get to the last page" Love Reading "The Burning, is an excellent follow up, with a psychologically interesting plot and complex, well-drawn characters" Irish Independent

About the Author

JANE CASEY was born and raised in Dublin. A graduate of Oxford with a M. Phil from Trinity College, Dublin, she lives in London where she works as an editor. This is her second novel.

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The Burning

We certainty of death is attended with uncertainties, in time, manner, places.

-Sir Thomas Browne, *Urn Burial*

Bodies recovered from fires present similar problems of investigation to bodies recovered from water. In both instances the integration of information obtained from the examination of the scene, the examination of the body, and the history of the decedent, is particularly important.

-Derrick J Pounder

She should have gone home with the others.

Kelly Staples stared at her reflection in the cracked and spotted mirror, trying to make sense of what she saw. Surely that wasn't her face squinting back. Mascara had smeared under her eyes, leaving shadowy smudges speckled with tiny flecks of black that wouldn't come off no matter how she rubbed at them. The remnants of her foundation were caked around her nose and across her forehead, where her skin looked dry. Her face was red and she had a spot on her chin that she was sure hadn't been there when she was getting ready to go out. Her mouth was slack and wet, and there was something on her top ...With a huge effort Kelly bent her head to inspect the damage. Wine, she thought hazily. She had tipped red wine down her front. She vaguely remembered laughing hysterically, holding the wet material away from her, offering someone—a man she'd never met before—the chance to suck it, so as not to waste it, before Faye dragged her away from him,

muttering crossly in her ear about behaving herself. But as Kelly had pointed out, or tried to, tonight was all about *not* behaving herself. Out with the girls for an evening of freedom, a pub crawl in Richmond. Dolled up, tanked up, ready for a laugh. It was getting near the end of term; they'd needed a break, all of them. Especially her, since she'd broken up with PJ three weeks before. Or, to be precise, he'd broken up with her. Two years they'd been together, and he'd thrown it all away to chase after Vanessa Cobbet, the fat slapper. A tear slid down Kelly's face,

gliding through what was left of her make-up.

They'd started with white wine at home, getting ready, and Kelly had had a few glasses. Giddy with nerves, she'd needed it. And it had got the evening off to a good start.

The room behind her rocked and swayed. Kelly shut her eyes, leaning heavily on the sink as she waited to feel better. She had been sick already; she had thought it might help if she was sick. Behind her, a cubicle door banged. A bony middle-aged woman slipped past her with a sidelong look that said *you're too young to be in that sort of state*. Kelly thought, but wasn't confident enough to say, *yeah, well you're too old to be in here in the first place*.

The toilets were cramped, two cubicles and two sinks squeezed into a narrow corner of the pub, reeking of aggressive air freshener and the sour-sweet smell of vomited wine—that was Kelly's contribution. The fixtures dated the last redesign to the eighties if not before: pink porcelain fittings and pink-and-brown floral curtains that hung limply at the frosted window. The rest of the pub wasn't much better, though the dim lighting hid most of the damage at night. The Jolly Boatman had seen better days, as had most of the clientele, but it was busy nonetheless, crowded with drinkers. The pubs by the river were all busy; it was Thursday night, the unofficial start to the weekend, and everyone was out to have a good time, including Kelly. But it had all gone wrong, somewhere along the way. The others had left, she remembered woozily, telling her to get a taxi when she was ready to come home. She'd been dancing with someone, a lad she didn't know, and Faye had tried to persuade her to leave but she'd refused. It had seemed to make sense then. It was her turn, her chance to have fun. They'd taken her at her word and left her. Kelly couldn't understand why she'd let them.

'I'm pissed,' she said out loud, trying to make eye contact with the bleary figure in the mirror. 'I need to go home.'

The contents of her handbag had spilt into the basin in front of her.

It seemed to take an extraordinarily long time to collect everything up again; her hands were clumsy and there were so many things—a pen, make-up, her keys, a bus ticket, some loose change—three cigarettes that had fallen out of their packet and were splotched with damp from the sink. The lid had come off a tube of lip gloss and as Kelly fumbled to pick it up sticky red goo smeared across the pink porcelain. It looked, for a moment, like blood.

The noise and heat hit her with a physical shock when she pulled open the door and she faltered a little, trying to remember which way she needed to go. The door to the outside world was to the left, she vaguely recalled, and set herself to push through the crowd. She was walking tall, acting sober, shoulders pulled well back and head up. It fooled no one except Kelly herself.

The crowd was thicker around the door, with smokers coming and going from the terrace that overlooked the water.

'Excuse me,' Kelly mumbled, trying and failing to shoulder past a heavyset man who didn't seem to hear her

or notice her canoning into his back.

‘Need a minicab, love? Let me give you a hand,’ said a voice in her ear as an arm snaked around her waist.
‘Time to go home, young lady.’

Without consciously agreeing, she found herself making progress, guided skillfully and swiftly through the throng until they reached the chill of outside air. It was a clear night, still and cold, and the frost was already starting to bite.

She turned then, ready to thank her rescuer, and found herself looking at a stranger, a man her father’s age or older. Kelly struggled to focus as the man’s face swooped up and down in front of her. There were rimless glasses, and hair that was surely too dark to be natural, and a moustache over a mouth that smiled, that moved, that was saying *where do you live my cab is just around the corner why don’t you come with me and I’ll see you home it’s no trouble it’s not far I don’t have anything better to do give me your bag that’s the girl are these your keys I’ll take care of you don’t you worry. You don’t want to be out on your own not at the moment not safe is it?*

Somehow, Kelly found herself following the man obediently. She wanted to take her bag back and find her own way home, but it seemed easier to go along with him. Her feet were hurting for one thing; the platform boots that had looked so glamorous before she left the house were pinching her toes and rubbing her heels, and the one on the right was squeezing her calf. They were far too high for a long walk home. And he was right; it probably wasn’t safe to be out on her own.

The man was nice, Kelly thought hazily. He was polite, well mannered, thoughtful. Older men were, weren’t they? They knew how to be gentlemen. PJ had never held her hand. PJ had never opened the car door for her and waited to close it after she sat down (a little heavily, truth be told, but then again he was a perfect gentleman and stared into the distance rather than at her skirt where it had ridden up). She usually got into the back when she took a taxi, but he’d opened the front passenger door and she didn’t want to be rude.

He got in and started the engine, then helped her with her seat belt before he drove off. He revved the engine unnecessarily so the sound bounced off the buildings either side of the road.

‘Mind if I smoke?’ Kelly asked, pushing her luck, and was surprised when he nodded. The car smelled of mint and pine air freshener, two strong scents that didn’t quite manage to disguise the tang of petrol, as if he’d spilt some on his shoes the last time he’d filled up. He wasn’t a smoker, she guessed. But he’d agreed to it; he couldn’t mind *that* much.

The only dry fag in the packet was the lucky one, the last one, the one Kelly always turned upside down when she opened a new pack so it stood out, a little white soldier standing proud beside the light-brown filter tips of the others. She fitted it between her lips and cupped her hands around the flame of her lighter, shielding herself automatically from a wind that wasn’t there. She had the lighter turned up too high; it nearly took her fringe off.

‘Fuck.’ She blinked a few times, dazzled, then shot a guilty look at the stranger. ‘Sorry. Shouldn’t swear.’

He shrugged. ‘Doesn’t bother me. What’s your name?’

‘Kelly.’ She flipped down the visor and inspected herself in the mirror, fluffing her fringe. ‘What’s your name?’

He hesitated for a second. 'Dan.'

'Where are you from, Dan? Birmingham?' It was a Midlands accent, she'd thought, but he shook his head.

'Round here.'

'Oh yeah?'

He nodded, his eyes on the road. Kelly looked out too, peering at the shops they were passing. She frowned.

'This isn't the way.'

He didn't answer.

'This isn't the way,' she said again, embarrassed to be complaining when he was being so helpful. 'You've gone wrong. It was left back there, not straight on.'

'This is a better way.'

'It isn't,' Kelly said, nettled. 'I should know how to get to my own house.'

The only response she got was a change of gear as he accelerated.

'Hey,' she said, warning in her voice as she braced one hand against the dashboard, the surface gritty with a...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Typically the book The Burning: A Maeve Kerrigan Crime Novel (Maeve Kerrigan Novels Book 1) has a lot info on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was written by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research before write this book. That book very easy to read you will get the point easily after scanning this book.

Zachary Kirkland:

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