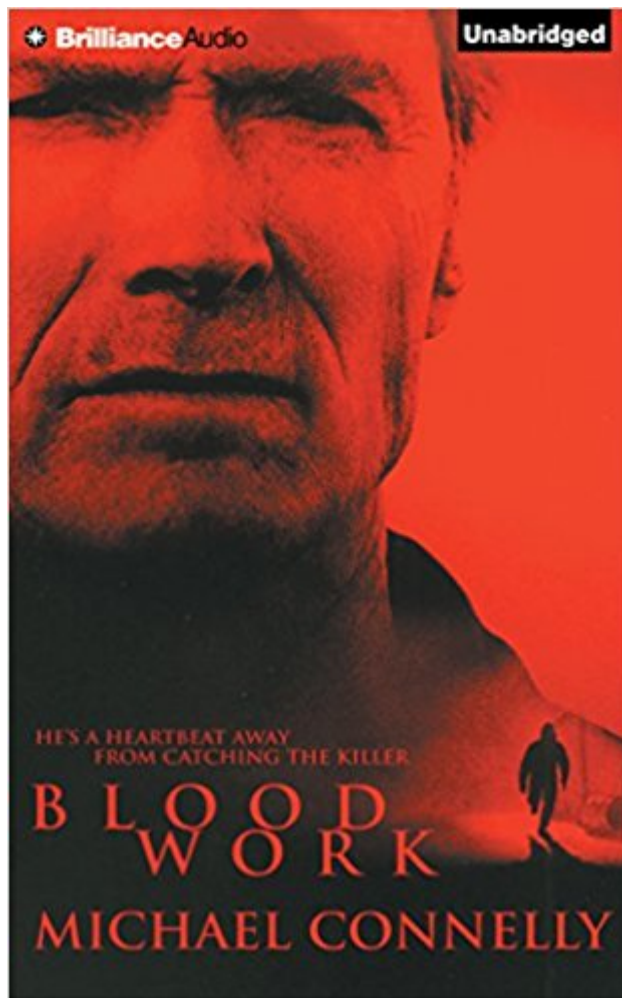


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# Blood Work



## Synopsis

Thanks to a heart transplant, former FBI agent Terrell McCaleb is enjoying a quiet retirement, renovating the fishing boat he lives on in Los Angeles Harbor. But McCaleb's calm seas turn choppy when a story in the "What Happened To?" column of the LA Times brings him face-to-face with the sister of the woman whose heart now beats in his chest. From her, McCaleb learns a terrible truth: that the donor of his heart was not killed in an accident, as he'd been told, but was murdered. Wracked with guilt over the fact that he's alive because another human being was killed, McCaleb embarks on a private investigation of his donor's murder—a crime as horrific as anything he ever encountered as a serial killer investigator for the FBI.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michael Connelly has been attracting fans by the droves with his hard-boiled, edgy thrillers. A former crime reporter for the Los Angeles Times, Connelly combines a poet's ear for language with a deep understanding of the criminal mind to create dark, dramatic stories that raise the thriller genre to a new level. In *Blood Work*, Connelly introduces a new character, Terry McCaleb, who was a top man at the FBI until a heart ailment forced his early retirement. Now he lives a quiet life, nursing his new heart and restoring the boat on which he lives in Los Angeles Harbor. Although he isn't looking for any excitement, when Graciela Rivers asks him to investigate her sister Gloria's death, her story hooks him immediately: the new heart beating in McCaleb's chest is Gloria's. As McCaleb investigates the evidence in the case, the suspected randomness of the crime gives way to an unsettling suspicion of a twisted intelligence behind the murder. Soon McCaleb finds himself

on the trail of a killer more horrifying than anything he ever encountered before. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Connelly follows up *Trunk Music* with a tautly paced, seductively involving thriller about a murder that is less random than it seems. Ex-FBI agent Terry McCaleb is recuperating from a heart transplant when beautiful Graciela Rivers walks up to his San Pedro houseboat, tells him that the donor of his new heart, her sister Gloria, was murdered in a convenience-store robbery and asks him to find the killer. Although his doctor warns him against it, McCaleb can't resist the case (any more than he could resist the serial-murder cases that caused his heart attack in the first place). With no license and little cooperation from the police, McCaleb reviews the evidence and connects a second murder to Gloria's killer. But it's only when he discovers that souvenirs have been taken from the victims that McCaleb realizes he is dealing with a type of killer with which he is all too familiar. Even working with seemingly shopworn material, Connelly produces fresh twists and turns, and, as usual, packs his plot with believable, logical surprises. He adds a moral twist by establishing a frightening bond between the hunter and the hunted, intimately connecting his detective to the criminal's guilt. Fans of Connelly's Harry Bosch novels will feel right at home with this beautifully constructed, powerfully resonating thriller, and newcomers will see right away what all the fuss has been about. Author tour. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

When I purchased *Blood Work* online, I thought I was buying the sequel to *Trunk Music*.

The Also By Michael Connelly page in the front matter of *Trunk Music* listed Connelly's books by publication date, however, not by which character series they were part of. So, when *Blood Work* arrived, I was surprised to be reading about former FBI agent Terrell Terry McCaleb instead of LAPD detective Hieronymus Harry Bosch. Surprised, but not disappointed. *Blood Work* is a good story in its own right (with an prospective reference to Michael Haller Jr. seven years before *The Lincoln Lawyer* was published). It follows McCaleb's investigation into the murder of Gloria Rivers. At first, her murder appeared to be the random act of a convenience store robber. As McCaleb digs into the case at the request of Gloria's sister Graciela, he uncovers a deeper, more sinister background to the case that hits a little too close to home. *Blood Work* was not quite the page-turner other Connelly books have been, at least not in my opinion. That only means it took me a weekend to read it instead of a day. Connelly is a great

storyteller and has become my favorite crime novelist. I close with a piece of dialogue between McCaleb and his neighbor Buddy Lockridge. It describes perfectly why crime novels and murder mysteries are so popular: [Lockridge:] "Good books are fast reads. You read crime novels?" [McCaleb:] "Why would I want to read made-up stuff when I've seen the real stuff and can't stand it?" Buddy started the car. He had to turn the ignition twice before it kicked over. "It's a much different world. Everything is ordered, good and bad clearly defined, the bad guy always gets what he deserves, the hero shines, no loose ends. It's a refreshing antidote to the real world." "Sounds boring." "No, it's reassuring. Where to now?" "Reassurance that the good guys beat the bad guys in the end. That's why I continue reading Michael Connelly. If you're interested in other books involving Terry McCaleb, check out *A Darkness More Than Night* and *The Narrows*. And if you want to read Connelly's Bosch books in proper order, make sure to check out his website.

*Blood Work* is an excellent mystery, believable and gripping. There are some unique ideas at the base of the plot that add extra appeal, such as the detective receiving the life-saving donation of the heart of a murder victim. This theme is well developed and adds an extra element of drama. I've enjoyed other books by Mr. Connelly, and this one was of the same high quality-- or perhaps even better. I enjoy a book more when the sex and profanity are not too explicit or prolific. This one is better than average for the genre. There's a little of both, but at levels I can tolerate without too much annoyance. I'd give *Blood Work* a 4 out of 5 for moderation in this area. The Kindle edition was quite well done. There were only a few typos, and the only formatting problem I noticed was the possible omission of blank lines ahead of some scene transitions. I'm fairly price sensitive on Kindle books-- it's hard for me to see how a \$15 price tag can be necessary. So, at \$10, this one is near the top of my range. I seldom write a review of a book that has so many reviews on record. However, in this case I want to add my recommendation, even if it only appears as (yet another) tick mark in the 5-star column.

I didn't think I would like this story - a former police detective who just had a heart transplant. The storyline seriously handicaps the protagonist and you wonder how such a fragile individual can find and beat the bad guys. But this is a well written and well developed story, even if some of the

characters are a bit thin. I couldn't really tell where this story was going but I certainly got caught up in the plot and found myself trying to second guess McCaleb's next moves. I will likely read more in this series; and there is an intersection between Terry and Harry further down the road.

Wow, another super murder mystery by Michael Connelly. I don't know how he can consistently write such intriguing, interesting and at the same time complex manuscripts as he did with Blood Work. All I can say is that he must have spent a lot of time doing the research. The story line is obviously original and the characters are developed well. Terry McCaleb, (ex FBI) who is recovering from major surgery puts his entire heart and investigative skills into solving the case. The path he takes is a lonely one as he is up against both local and federal agents who want the credit of solving the murder. The one exception is Detective Winston of the LA Sheriff's Office who is a believer in McCaleb and waits to see if his thoughts are on target. If you missed this book... get it...as you won't be disappointed.

I really enjoyed reading Michael Connelly's books, especially the Harry Bosch series, so I was glad to find this series on Terry McCaleb. I could visualize the characters and the locations and got into the story that way but it somehow lacked in something and I can't put my finger on it. I do find that I don't care to include too much romance in a serial killer novel, maybe that was it. I will purchase the next book since he already got the girl so maybe it will get more serious.

If you are a Connelly fan, you typically read about Harry Bosch or Mickey Haller. This time it is Terry McCaleb. Like Bosch, he is a cop, but unlike Bosch, this guy is recovering from a heart transplant. He is approached (while on med leave) by a woman whose sister was killed in a robbery. As the story unfolds, the reader discovers that the victim was coincidentally (?) the donor of his new heart. He is then conflicted about what his role should be. He is also in conflict with his cardiologist who wants his life to be stress-free. In a typically Connelly fashion, McCaleb starts to connect this crime with other crimes and works to find a useable link. Writing a palatable novel must be an difficult challenge. Writing so many with appealingly complex plots has become Connelly's signature. Have read ten of his novels. This is up there with the best.

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