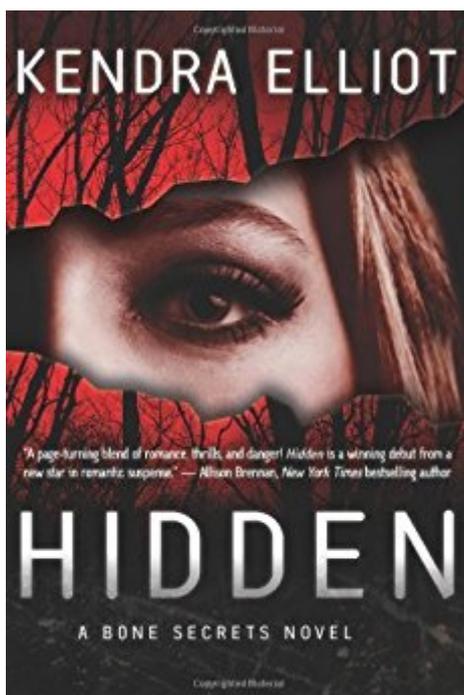


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# Hidden (A Bone Secrets Novel Book 1)



## Synopsis

Eleven years ago, the Co-ed Slayer murdered nine female students on the Oregon State University campus. Lacey Campbell barely escaped his attack, but lost her best friend whose remains were never found. As the sole surviving victim, Lacey helped send the sadistic serial killer to prison for life. Now a forensic odontologist examining teeth and bones for the state Medical Examiner, Lacey is devastated when she arrives at a crime scene and identifies the skeletal remains as her college friend. The remains are discovered on the land of ex-cop Jack Harper. Sparks fly between him and Lacey, even as they realize that the prosecution's witnesses from a decade ago are now being murdered one by one. All the evidence points to the Co-ed Slayer as the culprit, only, he's long since dead. So who's the new killer? And is Lacey next in line to die? Golden Heart finalist Kendra Elliot combines chilling suspense and steamy romance in a gripping tale, uniting in-depth forensic knowledge with a passion for thrillers. Set in the snowy winter of Oregon, *Hidden* creates spine-tingling chills.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Usually you can get a feel for a book if you download a sample. In this case, you would be tricked into

thinking this was going to be a great read. The novel starts out with a interesting characters and a gripping plot. The first clue there was a problem were the homophobic references. A cop feels like he had 'rolled in mud' when talking to a gay man and had to go flirt with women to 'get cleansed'. Holy homophobia, Batman!"From his breathy voice and overuse of the word 'fabulous', Mason had inferred the man was a flamer..."Dramatic sorrow had filled the flamer's voice as he related how DeCosta had ignored his advances." "EVEN A LESBIAN would react to the raw testosterone that pumped into the air around him." Who thinks like this? A really sexy person can make you switch teams??? No matter how sexy Sofia Vergara is, I don't have an urge to jump her bones. Maybe this magic testosterone could replace those programs that gay people are enrolled in to change their orientation. Then there are multiple references to the fa. word. At two-thirds the book starts to go off the rails. With the love of his life in immediate danger, the hero gets drunk. The two of them are unable to figure out how to get a hotel room without getting tracked by their credit cards yet they are surrounded by friends and police who could help. Sex with a known playboy without any discussion of a condom or any form of birth control was surprising. Then the heroine says it herself, 'It'd been like a B horror movie, and she'd starred as the too-stupid-to live female lead." Yup. The final five percent goes beyond unbelievable into the land of ridiculous. The behavior of the police, Lacey's father, and particularly Kelly is nothing less mind-boggling and throws the reader under the literary bus. The ending makes Scooby-Doo look like Tolstoy.

I'm ashamed to admit that I did finish this book because I was hooked enough to want to know who the killer was, but also so I could do the public service of writing this review and saving you from having to read it. Here's the plot free of spoilers: 10 years ago Lacey Campbell narrowly escaped being a victim of the co-ed killer but tragically lost her friend Suzanne and for years struggled with survivors guilt and depression. Now she is a doctor of forensic dentistry and while at the scene of a found skeleton realizes it is Suzanne the one victim of the co-ed killer whose body was never found. With this discovery someone's plan has been set in motion, he is killing people involved in the sentencing of the original killer. Is he a copycat, or did the co-ed killer have a partner that was never found? The apartment where the body was dumped belong to Jack Harper a rich eligible bachelor with the reputation of a playboy. He and Lacey are instantly attracted to each other. Harper is a former police officer who also has a guilt complex from a shooting during his time in uniform that led to him leaving the force. Killer stalks Lacey, Lacey and Jack struggle with their feelings for each other, also there is an ex-boyfriend turned friend of Lacey's hanging around to up the stakes for Jack, and a creepy abusive ex-husband who is the possible killer. All of this is interspersed with the

occasional gloating interlude from the perspective of the killer which gives us clues into his insight and next victim all while conveniently withholding enough to leave him unidentified. Here is my opinion (not completely free of spoilers, but I won't tell you who did it): the romance was badly written, really badly written, full of the tired cliches of how attracted they are to each other but because (insert stupid reason here) they can't be together and so there is a lot of will they/won't they back and forth that quickly becomes tiresome. As to the mystery/suspense part of the story it was engaging because you were kept in suspense but the characters were unlikable, the men were too macho and one dimensional and the heroine (also one dimensional, past tragedy  $\neq$  interesting character) didn't have the sense god gave a goose. A killer is stalking people connected with an old case in which she was involved and yet she refuses to leave town or even her house despite his sending her notes that he is coming for her because she refuses to be frightened away from her life. When she finally does agree to go into hiding she is immediately lured out the next day in what everyone acknowledges is an attempt to lure her out of hiding but somehow they let her come out anyway and then fail to adequately protect her leaving her alone in a car with instructions to keep the door locked despite the fact that there is a killer on the loose WHO THEY KNOW IS TRYING TO LURE HER OUT OF HIDING. And this is all aside from the terrible writing (from a grammatical/literary point of view, I already told you what I think of the plot/characters), weird page breaks, multiple POVs (sometimes switching from one character's POV to another's without even a new paragraph), and nonexistent editing. As another reviewer pointed out the author misuses common phrases and there are places where revision was done but a word or two was not removed. I guess I would have let all this slide and not written a review if it wasn't for the gratuitous violence against women (rape? sex slaves? is this really necessary to move the plot?) and the homophobia. At two points in the book two separate characters refer to gay men. In one the author exclusively uses the word "flamer" and then states that her male character felt like talking to him made him "feel like he'd rolled in mud." and thus needed to go flirt with some (female obviously) baristas down the street to feel cleansed. In the other she chooses to use the far more upsetting word "fa\* ". A fa\* who gave a deceased character AIDS no less. I would have tried to let this go as a writing style choice set in the voice of the character speaking at the time if she didn't also mention that "even a lesbian would react to the raw testosterone" of the lead male character. SIGH. And here I thought this was 2014.

Save your reading time. The author doesn't get into police work or forensics. If you like rich hero's chasing after their girl, this book is for you. I was hoping for a little Karen Slaughter or Patricia

Cornwell type tension and all I did was keep putting the book down instead of turning pages because it was too predictable.

There was a good idea here, but it got lost by the end of the first chapter. On a bitterly cold day a man walking his dog discovers a skeleton, carefully placed, and meant to be found. A grumpy forensic pathologist (is there any other kind?) calls a forensic odontologist out to the scene to help identify the remains. Two smart and savvy ladies are working over a small female skeleton and one of them is overwhelmed by a piece of evidence that connects the skeleton to her past. The stage has been set for an epic revenge story and I am enjoying this. A nice hook has been set with a fat little worm to tempt me, but then it just floats there...ignored by the author. There are a few good lines between the ladies, and then the pathologist is never heard from again. However, the hunky guy Lacey (the tooth lady) noticed at the crime scene, is in just about every scene in the book. He stares...she pants. He growls...she moans. He is so hot, she melts, yadda yadda. Her profession is only relevant in the first chapter, and as a means to get Lacey and Jack to meet. All the other characters are stick figures, so there isn't anything to care about in their development. The best and most interesting person in the book is a girl who has been dead for 10 years and who had saved Lacey's life. The truly devastating betrayal in the book, by another friend, is given a few paragraphs in the last chapter. A really good story could have been developed around these three women and the sacrifice and betrayal that lie at the core of their relationships. Instead it's a predictable book, which is ok, but it really could have been so much more.

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