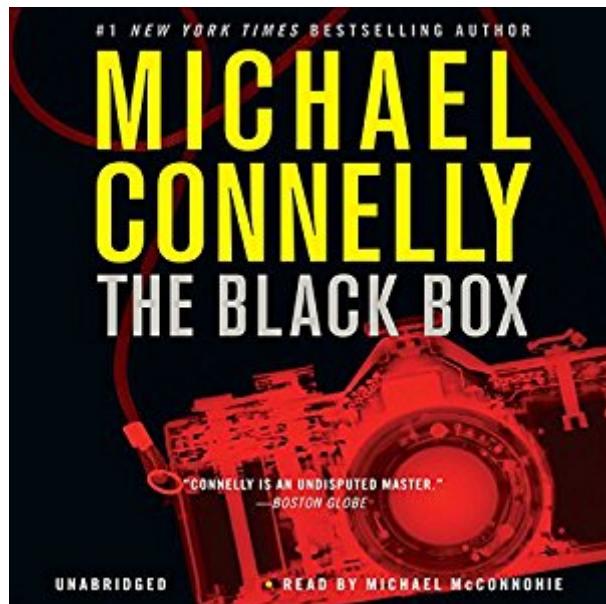


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The Black Box: Harry Bosch, Book 18



Synopsis

In a case that spans 20 years, Harry Bosch links the bullet from a recent crime to a file from 1992, the killing of a young female photographer during the L.A. riots. Harry originally investigated the murder, but it was then handed off to the Riot Crimes Task Force and never solved. Now Bosch's ballistics match indicates that her death was not random violence, but something more personal, and connected to a deeper intrigue. Like an investigator combing through the wreckage after a plane crash, Bosch searches for the "black box", the one piece of evidence that will pull the case together. Riveting and relentlessly paced, *The Black Box* leads Harry Bosch, "one of the greats of crime fiction" (New York Daily News), into one of his most fraught and perilous cases.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After so many Harry Bosch stories you would think they should start to run out of steam - IMHO this is not so. Michael Connelly is a consummate author who can keep a great character running and evolving and continue to produce a top-class page-turning police procedural. In the last book, after a short retirement Harry Bosch returned to the LAPD with a 5 year contract under the Deferred Retirement Option Plan - "The DROP". He now works with the Open Unsolved Unit chasing up cold cases. In 1999, at the height of the LA Riots, Bosch briefly gets involved with the discovery of the gunshot death of a pretty female free-lance Danish press photographer who was apparently killed as part of the riot. This case had always troubled Bosch and he gladly accepts the challenge although after all that time the trail has gone cold. Bosch is an impatient detective - to him momentum is everything. Once he is on the trail he is a bloodhound who never lets up until he finds

a break. He calls this "The Black Box" because, similar to air crash investigation a single verified clue may open up the whole case. After diligent and clever police work Bosch finds his Black Box and discovers a web of intrigue and violence going back to the first Gulf War. Working the case in his normal independent manner is not helped by his strained relationship with and lack of respect for the competence of his superiors at LAPD, especially his current Lieutenant (O'Toole - nickname "O'Fool"). "You are the worst kind of police officer, Bosch. You are arrogant, a bully, and you think the laws and regulations don't apply to you." O'Toole refers Bosch to Internal Affairs on what seems to be a petty matter, but it is important because it affects the way Bosch can run the investigation and if the complaint is upheld he could easily lose his job because he is on a DROP contract. Connelly keeps up the pressure and spins an exciting tale of skilled police investigation by a dedicated, independent but somewhat personally flawed Harry Bosch. I recommend this book as a great read for lovers of police procedurals and a good Christmas present for those who still read print books.

aHHH! I am happy to report that Bosch wasn't in front of IAD---well, maybe a little, but it wasn't as boring as his other problems with them. It begins during the early 1990s riots in LA, murders, looting, arson, anarchy. He and his partner go to the scenes, but there are so many calls they can't spend the time to get much information for a case. This particular murder becomes personal and he is determined to find out why a photojournalist from Denmark ends up killed execution style in an alley in LA. Years later he is working Open-Unsolved cases and comes across this particular murder book. It is intriguing and he is determined to follow it through to being solved and give the victim's family closure. It is a strange and convoluted case, but he manages to pluck strings and get to the core which takes him sleuthing from the Iraq war to modern times. The only thing I find disconcerting is that he is involved with different women at different times, gets married to one, but then she's not in the next book. I guess the author forgets his continuity occasionally.

The Black Box is one of Harry Bosch's best cases. A woman is found shot to death in an alley during the Rodney King riots. She is a Scandinavian photographer/journalist. Years later the gun which killed her surfaces. It has been used to kill several other people. Harry investigates, seeking to close a cold case. On the face of it this is a straightforward novel, but the skills required for its execution are considerable. Given the novel's nature I do not want to spoil the reader's experience by saying too much about the details of the plot. Suffice to say that in this case we follow the gun (not the cash). Connelly takes us through Bosch's thoughts and procedures, at eye level. We see

what he sees and we learn how and why he attempts to solve the case in the manner that he chooses. In some ways, detective stories simply involve going from one person to the next, asking questions and piecing together a complex puzzle. That is true, in general terms, for The Black Box. The enormity of the task, however, is such that we are drawn into the case, wondering how on earth Harry will do what Harry does. When we see what he does it all makes sense, even though the task seemed so daunting. One of the first rules of mystery writing is that you have to treat the reader honestly, giving the reader the information that the detective has, and not pulling rabbits out of hats or utilizing secret, withheld information. The Black Box could be used as a near-perfect example of this process, except at the end where there is a bit of implausibility here and there. As Harry investigates he is worried about his teenage daughter and he is being micromanaged by a pinheaded lieutenant. This adds rich, personal dimensions to the story that do not, appropriately, get in the way of the story. The Black Box is among the very best of the Bosch novels.

Arrogantly stupid men doing arrogantly stupid things and then following that up with even more stupid things to hide the original stupidity..... Harry Bosch, flawed, stubborn, and so very much a decent man, doesn't give up on trying to find "the black box", that little bit of information that casts the light of understanding on the evidence and reveals the evil doers. I appreciate this complex story and the view of the past . Excellent read.

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