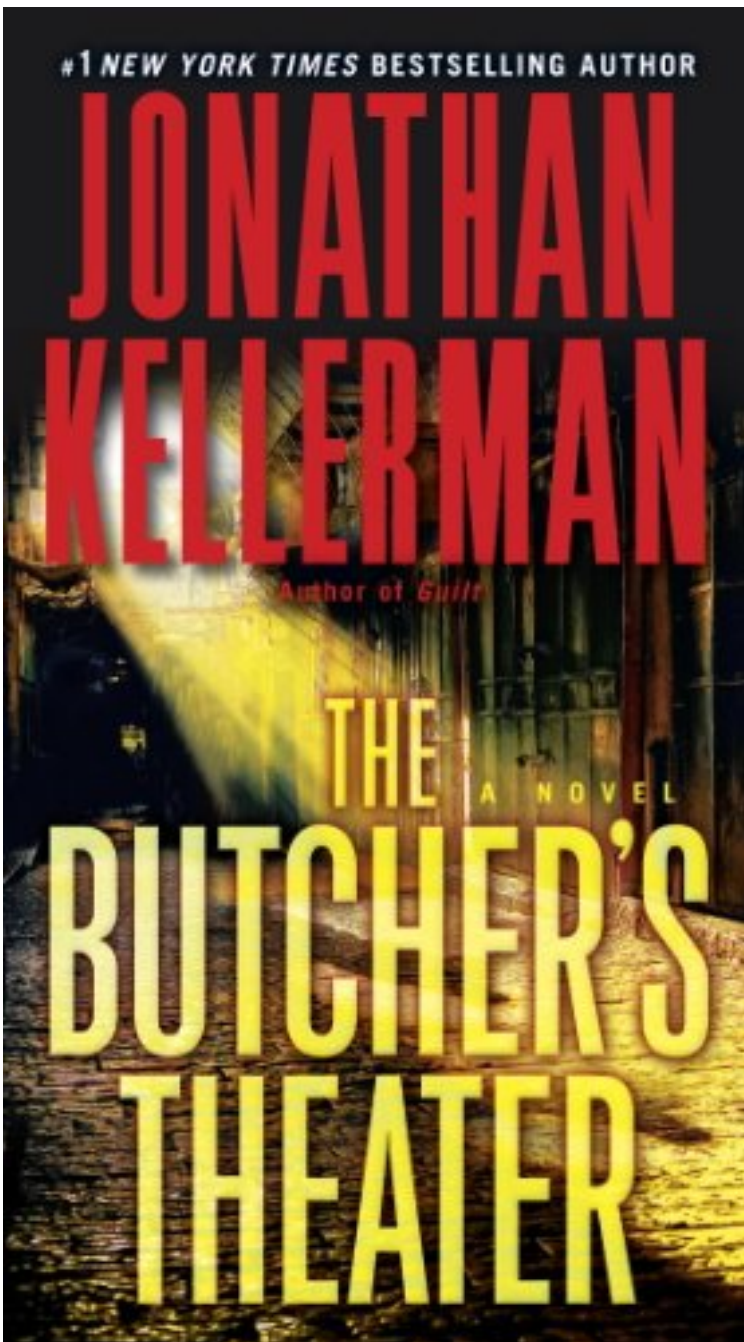


[PDF] File size: 20.Mb

# The Butcher's Theater: A Novel



*Par Jonathan Kellerman*  
DOC / \*audiobook / ebooks / Download  
PDF / ePub

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #201212 dans eBooksPubli le: 2003-05-20Sorti le: 2003-05-20Format: Ebook Kindle

[PDF] The Butcher's Theater: A Novel

**Par Jonathan Kellerman : The Butcher's Theater: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Butcher's Theater: A Novel:

Download

Read Online

## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurNEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER They call the ancient hills of Jerusalem the butchers theater. Here, upon this bloodstained stage, a faceless killer performs his violent specialty. The first to die brutally is a girl. She is drained of blood, then carefully bathed and shrouded in white. Precisely one

week later, a second victim is found. Crisp . . . suspenseful . . . intense. The New York Times Book From the sacred Wailing Wall to monasteries where dark secrets are cloistered, from black-clad Bedouin enclaves to labyrinthine midnight alleys, veteran police inspector Daniel Sharavi and his crack team plunge deep into a city simmering with religious and political passions to hunt for a murderer whose insatiable taste for bloodshed could destroy the delicate balance on which Jerusalem's very survival depends. **BONUS:** This edition includes an excerpt from Jonathan Kellerman's *Guilt*. Excerpt: Spring 1985 Yaakov Schlesinger could think only of food. Idiot, he told himself. Immersed in such beauty and unable to take your mind off your belly. Unclipping his flashlight from his belt, he beamed it briefly on the southern gate of the campus.

Satisfied that the lock was in place, he hitched up his trousers and trudged forward in the darkness, determined to ignore the gnawing from within. The Mount Scopus Road climbed suddenly, but it was a rise that he knew well what was this, his two hundredth patrol? and he remained sure-footed. Veering to the left, he walked toward the eastern ridge and looked out, with a pleasurable sense of vertigo, at nothingness: the unlit expanse of the Judean wilderness. In less than an hour dawn would break and sunlight would flood the desert like honeyed porridge dripping thickly into an earthenware bowl . . . ach, there it was again. Food. Still, he rationalized, a bowl was exactly what it looked like to him. Or maybe a dinner plate. A broad, concave disk of desert, chalky-white, seamed with copper, dotted by mesquite and pocked with caves a gigantic cracked dinner plate tipping into the Dead Sea. Any terrorist foolish enough to try to cross the wilderness would be as conspicuous as a fly on paper, certain to be spotted by the Border Patrol long before reaching the Maale Adumin settlement. Which made his job, he supposed, little more than a formality. An old man's assignment. He absently touched the butt of the M-1 carbine strapped over his shoulder and experienced a sudden rush of memories. A twinge of melancholy that he suppressed by telling himself he had nothing to complain about. That he should be thankful for the opportunity to volunteer. Grateful for the opportunity to volunteer. Grateful for the nightly exercise, the cool, fragrant air. Proud of the slap of the M-1 against his shoulder blades, the crisp Hagah uniform that made him feel like a soldier again. A scurrying sound crackled somewhere beyond the ridge and caused his heart to jump. He pulled the carbine down, held it in both hands, and waited. Silence, then another scurry, this time easy to classify: the frantic dash of a rodent or shrew. Letting out his breath, he kept his right hand clamped around the M-1, took the flashlight in his left, and skimmed the beam over the brush. A clump of weeds. A filmy swirl of night-flying insects. Stepping away from the ridge, he commenced walking south. The barrenness of the road was broken at the crest by a stolid, many-roofed mass huddled around a high, peaked tower: the Amelia Catherine Hospital, arrogantly colonial on this Levantine stretch of mountaintop. Because the hospital compound was U.N. property, it was excluded from his route, but sometimes he liked to stop and take a break just outside the grounds. Smoke a cigarette and watch as the odor of Turkish tobacco stirred the goats and donkeys penned behind the main building. Why, he wondered, were the Arabs allowed to keep animals here? What did that say for the hygiene of the place? His stomach growled. Absurd. He'd eaten a hearty dinner at eight, spent the next four hours sitting on the balcony while slowly ingesting the food Eva set out for him before she went to bed: dried apricots and apples, a string of fat Calimyrna figs, tea wafers, lemon cookies, marzipan, tangerines and kumquats, toasted garinim, jagged chunks of bittersweet chocolate, jelly candies, halvah. Topped off by an entire liter bottle of grapefruit juice and a Sipholux full of soda the last in hopes that gas bubbles might accomplish what solid matter had failed to do: fill him up. No such luck. He'd lived with his hunger and its accomplice, insomnia for more than forty years. Long enough to think of them as a pair of living, breathing creatures. Abdominal homunculi implanted by the bastards at Dachau. Twin demons who scraped away at his peace of mind, evoking constant misery. True, it wasn't cancer, but neither was it trivial. The pain fluctuated. At best, a dull, maddeningly abstract hollowness; at worst, real, grinding agony, as if an iron hand were clamped around his vitals. No one took him seriously anymore. Eva said he was fortunate to be able to eat whatever he wanted and remain skinny. This, as she pinched the soft ring around her own thickening waistline and examined the latest diet brochure handed out at the Kupat Holim clinic. And the doctors delighted in telling him there was nothing wrong with him. That the experiments had left no tangible scars. He was a superb specimen, they insisted, possessing the alimentary tract, and general constitution, of a man twenty years younger. You're seventy years old, Mr. Schlesinger, one of them had explained before settling back with a self-satisfied smirk on his face. As if that settled it. An active metabolism, another had pronounced. Be thankful you're as active as you are, adoni. Still another had listened with apparent sympathy, raising his hopes, then dashing them by suggesting that he visit the Psychiatric Facility at Hadassah. Which only illustrated that the man was just another civil-service idiot the

gnawing was in his belly, not in his head. He vowed to cease all dealings with the clinic and find himself a private doctor, cost be damned. Someone who could understand what it was like to feel as if you were starving amid plenty, who could appreciate the bottomless ache that had plagued him since the Americans had discovered him, lying limply atop a mound of stinking, broken corpses. . . .Enough, fool. Ancient history. You're free, now. A soldier. The man in charge, armed and masterful. Privileged to patrol the most beautiful cities at the most beautiful hours. To watch her awaken, bathed in lavender and scarlet light, like a princess rising from a bed canopied with silk . . .Schlesinger the poet.He took a deep breath, filled his nostrils with the sharp perfume of Jerusalem pine, and turned away from the looming silhouette of the hospital. Exhaling slowly, he gazed out over the steeply sloping terraces of Wadi el Joz, toward the view from the southwest, the one he always saved for last:The Old City, backlit in amber, turrets and battlements stitching a flame-colored hem across the pure black sky. Beyond the walls, faint shadowy contours of domes, spires, steeples, and minarets. At the southern end the vertical thrust of The Citadel. Dominating the north, the Haram esh-Sharif plateau, upon which sat the Great Mosque of the Rock, its golden dome burnished rosy in the half-light, nestled within the sleeping city like a brooch cradled in gray velvet.Immersed in beauty like that, how could he think of his belly? And yet, the ache had intensified, quickened, taken on a pulse of its own.Angry, he picked up his pace and crossed the road. Just off the asphalt was a shallow gully leading to the empty fields that anticipated the wadi. Casually, he ran the flashlight over familiar terrain. The same damned contours, the same damned shadows. This olive tree, that row of border stones. The rusty abandoned water heater that had been there for months, glints of broken glass, the sharp stink of sheep dung . . .And something else.An oblong shape, maybe a meter and a half long, tucked into a terraced pocket near the top of the north wall of the gully. Lying inert at the base of an olive sapling. Unmoving. A bomb? His instinctive answer was noit looked too soft. But one couldnt be too careful.As he considered his options, his arm began to move, seemingly of its own volition, sweeping the flashlight beam over the shape. Up and down, back and forth. This was definitely something new. Striped? No, two tones of fabric. Dark over light. A blanket over sheeting. A shroud. Glistening wet and dark around the edges. The light continued to wash across the gully. Nothing. No one. He considered calling for help, decided it would be needlessly alarmist. Better to check first.Carbine in hand, he inched to the rim of the gully, began climbing down, then stopped, his feet suddenly leaden. Short of breath. Fatigued. Feeling his age. Deliberating some more, he berated himself: Milksop. A pile of blankets turns you to jelly? Probably nothing.He resumed his descent, zigging and zagging toward the shape, extending his free arm horizontally in an attempt to maintain balance. Stopping every few seconds to aim the flashlight. Radar-eyed. Ears attuned to alien sounds. Prepared at any moment to drop the light and pull the M-1 into firing position. But nothing moved; the silence remained unblemished. Just him and the shape. The foreign shape.As he lowered himself farther, the ground dipped abruptly. He stumbled, fought for equilibrium, dug his heels in, and remained upright. Good. Very good for an old man. Active metabolism . . .He was almost there now, just a few feet away. Stop. Check the area for other foreign shapes. The hint of movement. Nothing. Wait. Go on. Take a good look. Avoid that mound of dung. Step around the panicky scatter of glossy black beetles. Tiny black legs scampering over clots of dung. Onto something pale. Something extending from the sheeting. Pale lozenges.He was standing over the shape now. Kneeling. Chest tautened by breath withheld. Tilting his light downward, he saw them, soft and speckled like small white cucumbers: human fingers. The soft pad of palm. Speckled. Night-black. Edged with crimson. An outstretched hand. Beseeching.Pinching a corner of the blanket between his fingers, he began peeling it back with the foreboding and compulsion of a child turning over a rock, knowing all the while that slimy things lived on the underside.There. Done. He let go of the fabric and stared at what hed exposed.Lock-jawed, he moaned involuntarily. He washad been a soldier, had seen his share of abominations. But this was different. Clinical. So terribly reminiscent of something else . . . Averting his eyes, he felt them swing back again and lock on to the contents of the blanket, imbibing the horror. Suddenly he was reeling, swaying, bobbing helplessly in a sea of images. Memories. Other hands, other nightmares. Hands. The same pose of supplication. Thousands of hands, a mountain of hands. Begging for mercy that never came.Rising unsteadily, he took hold of an olive limb and exhaled in fierce, hot gusts. Sickened to the core, yet not unaware of the irony of the moment.For what lay within the sheets had demolished the demons, freeing him for the first time in more than forty years.He felt his viscera begin to churn. The iron hand letting go. A burning tide of bile rose uncontrollably in his gullet. Retching and heaving, he vomited repeatedly in the dirt, one part of him curiously detached, as if her were observing his own defilement. Careful to direct the spray away from the blankets. Not wishing to worsen what had already

been done. When he emptied himself he looked down again with a child's magical hope. Believing, for an instant, that his emesis had served as a ritual, a sacrificial atonement that had somehow caused the horror to vanish. But the only thing that had vanished was his hunger. *Revue de presse* Roller-coaster suspense . . . a beautifully rendered setting. *Los Angeles Times* Spellbinding . . . a vivid, fascinating tale. *Time*