



Turn to Stone

Brian Freeman

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Driving home to Minnesota one night after a long road trip, Duluth detective Jonathan Stride stops by the small Wisconsin town where his mother is buried to pay a visit to her grave. As he walks through the cemetery, a local sheriff's car pulls up and an officer steps out, pulls out his gun, and takes his own life before Stride even has time to react.

After giving his statement to the police, Stride is asked to unofficially investigate the reason behind the suicide by the officer's young widow—a woman who several years earlier had become famous as the survivor of a horrific kidnapping—and to clear out of town as soon as possible by the sheriff, who is up for reelection.

Against his better instincts, Stride becomes enmeshed in a gruesome and suspenseful search for a local killer who knows things no one alive should know—and who may kill again to keep it that way.

Turn to Stone Details

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From Reader Review Turn to Stone for online ebook

Donna says

This little 'half-book/novella' was a super quick read. I liked this. It even had a bit of a creepy vibe which was new and added an extra little twist to the story.

My biggest complaint about this series is how all the women want a piece of Johnny. Sometimes this squabbling comes across as a little adolescent. So, I absolutely loved that there was no love interest in this book. It was just Johnny doing what Johnny does. So 4 stars.

M says

Clever Plot With Surprising Twists

For a short read, this moody mystery features a complex plot with several unexpected twists, which made me question the motives and actions of many secondary characters. The protagonist—homicide detective Jonathan Stride from Duluth, Minnesota—visits his mother's grave in Wisconsin, and he sees a local police officer shoot himself. In this small town, everyone seems to have secrets and hidden connections to the suicide and a murder possibly tied to the suicide.

The wintry weather, isolated country homes, dense forests, old beliefs about a devil, and possibly haunted ruins add to the unsettling atmosphere.

I didn't have problems reading this novella as a stand-alone, and the plot threads for this storyline are neatly tied off. However, when the protagonist returns to the city, another mystery confronts him. Trying to get me to read the next book? Knocked off a star.

Brian Freeman says

My new novella TURN TO STONE is half the length of an entire novel. It's the perfect opportunity to meet Jonathan Stride again as he tackles one of his most shocking cases ever.

Stride stops in a snowy cemetery in the small town of Shawano, Wisconsin, to visit his mother's grave, but he finds himself a witness to a shocking act of violence. Stride is a stranger in town, and the local police don't want him there...but his search for the truth makes him fear that a gruesome crime is about to happen.

I've been to Shawano many times on the way to Door County (where my sixth book THE BONE HOUSE is set), and I did an event at the local library last spring. At the time, one of my Wisconsin readers suggested I visit an old ruined Novitiate building outside the town.

I did -- and I loved the ruined setting of the building on the shores of the Wolf River. It looked like a perfect place for the kind of dark things you find in my books. When I talked with my publisher over the summer about doing a special Stride novella ahead of the release of THE COLD NOWHERE, I immediately thought about Shawano and that scary old ruined estate. So that's how TURN TO STONE started.

TURN TO STONE works hand in hand with THE COLD NOWHERE. When you read Chapter 1 of the new novel, you'll find Stride getting back to his Duluth cottage around 2:00 am one night. I always wondered why he was getting back so late. Now, in TURN TO STONE, you'll find out exactly what terrible crime was keeping Stride away from home.

You can start reading TURN TO STONE with an excerpt at my web site:
<http://www.bfreemanbooks.com/turn-to-...>

Drusie's Biblio says

You can translate this review on: <http://labibliotecadidrusie.blogspot.it/>

Un thriller psicologico molto sottile e particolare.

L'inizio è d'effetto: un cimitero di notte (ma non dovrebbero essere chiusi?), un poliziotto che guarda, un altro che arriva e si spara.

Ammettiamo tutti che, anche senza essere detective, la cosa un po' impressione la fa. E Stride è un detective, per una volta quasi normale, che rimane, suo malgrado, incuriosito, se non proprio shockato, dal gesto di quella specie di collega.

Un poliziotto che si suicida fa sempre un certo effetto, ma Stride scopre presto che non c'è solo quello. Percy infatti sembrava non avere molti motivi per un gesto simile. O almeno non li aveva fino a pochi giorni prima.

Attraverso gli occhi del protagonista la vicenda si dipana velocemente e con un buon numero di colpi di scena, ben dosati e distribuiti.

Gli ingredienti che caratterizzano un buon thriller ci sono tutti e Freeman riesce a mixarli davvero bene. Probabilmente gli elementi originali non sono molti, ma il racconto suscita comunque tutte le giuste emozioni: curiosità, dubbio, intuizione e sorpresa.

Tra l'altro è uno di quei romanzi che adoro perché gli indizi ci sono, ma in genere li si notano alla fine quando, una volta scoperto il colpevole, si riesce a collegarli.

E' presente anche un leggero alone soprannaturale, in quanto viene data alcune volte la colpa al diavolo e alla possessione demoniaca per quello che accade. Per fortuna Stride non ci crede e continua ad indagare.

Apprezzabili anche i sottili risvolti psicologici e le analisi. Da un lato mi è spiaciuto che non fossero più approfondite, dall'altro forse avrebbero appesantito e spezzato un romanzo che invece si mantiene veloce e scorrevole.

Carino il finale da serie televisiva che chiude il libro, ma potrebbe anche costituire l'inizio di un nuovo episodio.

Personaggi: Jonathan Stride è il 'figlioccio' di Freeman, protagonista di più di una vicenda, che suppongo costituiscano una serie all'interno della quale si inserisce anche questa. Nel racconto ci sono riferimenti al

passato ma non è necessario aver letto gli altri libri per comprenderli (anzi, se non avessi sbirciato la biografia non avrei neanche supposto l'esistenza di testi pregressi) e questo è un punto a favore. Venendo al personaggio in sé, per una volta niente misantropo asociale scontroso e scorbutico (per i quali io, comunque, stravedo), ma un uomo un filo più normale e pacato che usa la logica con freddezza ma non ritiene di dover fare la guerra al mondo facendo pure l'incompreso. Certo, ha i suoi problemi relazionali, ma rientrano un po' più nei canoni standard delle persone comuni.

Gli altri credo che siano delle 'comparse' attinenti a questo singolo romanzo, che non vedremo nei successivi (né suppongo siano nei precedenti). Forse sono un po' più stereotipati, ma non per questo brutti.

Kelly è quella che forse mi lascia più perplessa, non perché sia mal riuscita, ma perché è un personaggio molto complesso, con uno storico pesante che ha lasciato segni che avrei voluto più approfonditi e analizzati.

Stesso discorso per Mike. Un ragazzino che ha subito così tanto meritava un approfondimento. Non su ciò che gli è capitato, ma sul suo modo di pensare e di affrontare le cose.

Adorabile la figura dello zio Richard.

Stile: Veloce, scorrevole e piacevole. Freeman si sofferma poco sulle descrizioni e su tutto ciò che può far rallentare il romanzo a favore di una scrittura intensa e cinematografica incentrata sulle azioni. Il lettore non viene mai tediato, i colpi di scena sono ben dosati e si viene tenuti spesso con il fiato sospeso. Anche il ritmo è ben calibrato, non mette ansia ma non ti permette di lasciare il libro. Io l'ho finito continuando a dire: un ultimo capitolo poi smetto, tanto ci metto due minuti.

Giudizio finale complessivo: Forse non un capolavoro ma comunque un libro scorrevole che mi è piaciuto molto. Ho scoperto un personaggio a suo modo affascinante di cui voglio leggere ancora.

Ho adorato l'uso del 'niente è come appare' e la psicologia contorta dei protagonisti.

Sono rimasta a lungo indecisa se giudicarlo troppo veloce e poco approfondito, o giustamente intenso senza rallentamenti. Propendo per la seconda. Nonostante avessi preferito l'approfondimento di alcuni aspetti, alla fine ne ho apprezzato di più la scorrevolezza.

Inoltre, pur essendo basato sulla psicologia, è piuttosto leggero e comprensibile e adatto a tutti in qualunque momento.

Un plauso inoltre per avermi incuriosita abbastanza da voler leggere anche i lavori precedenti e successivi.

Voto: 8/10

Matt Schiariti says

There are a handful of authors whose work I buy automatically without even reading the book descriptions. Brian freeman is one of those authors, and Turn to Stone does not disappoint. As gripping as anything I've

read in a long time, it sucked me in from the very beginning, and I found myself reading it in almost one sitting, ultimately finishing it in a day because I HAD to know what happened next.

What Freeman does so well in Turn to Stone, as he does with all his novels, is work the fine line between right and wrong, guilt and innocence. Things that seem black and white upon first inspection turn to muddled gray tones as the story progresses, a testament to well-drawn, genuine characters. From the stalwart, yet imperfect Stride, to truly SICK and TWISTED villains and all points in between, Freeman knows how to create characters, flesh them out, and depict true and believable motivations, all while weaving a good number of intricate plot lines into a razor sharp story.

The plotting is tight, the dialogue organic, the plot compelling and addictive, and the writing borders on addictive. And when you're done, when the case is solved, you get an ending that will stick with you for a very long time. You may think you have it figured out, but chances are you don't. You may think you know these characters, but there's always something else lurking beneath the surface. The author points at that well-drawn line in the sand, the one that separates good and evil, and stomps all over it.

If you're a Brian Freeman fan you'll feel right at home with Turn to Stone. If you haven't read him yet, I suggest you go read the first Stride novel, 'Immoral' right now. In the world of crime/psychological thrillers and mysteries, Freeman stands out as one of the best.

Eric_W says

I have enjoyed previous entries in the Jonathan Stride series and it was a pleasure to return to another. Lt. Stride of the Duluth Detective Unit decided to pause on his way back home at the small town where his mother was buried, to briefly visit her gravesite. Just as he finished, a sheriff's car pulled up to the cemetery. Thinking someone in town had seen his flashlight and called the police, he headed over toward the car only to watch in horror as the deputy stands in front of the car and blows his brains out.

Turns out the dead deputy, Percy Andrews, was a local hero, having rescued a woman he subsequently married from a particularly vicious man after being kidnapped and tortured for a week..

Stride, being Stride, can't leave well enough alone. Despite the Sheriff's unequivocal request to leave the investigation alone, Stride is a bit taken by Percy's widow who is soon charged with the murder of Greg Hamlin. Percy had been investigating Hamlin's disappearance. His body is soon found in Percy's RV out in the woods. He, too, had been tortured. Stride is soon unraveling a tangled web of interconnections leading to murder that had their genesis decades earlier. The victims had the word Teufel carved on their chests. Was the Devil involved? Very enjoyable read that lead in an unexpected direction.

One thing. The last paragraph leads directly into the next book, Cold Nowhere. I sometimes find that irritating.

Linda Strong says

Detective Jonathan Stride is returning home one night when he decides to stop in the cemetery and pay respects to his mother and grandparents who are permanently resting there. During the course of his visit, a

local sheriff's car pulls up, an officer steps out, pulls out his gun and takes his own life.

Asked by the man's widow to investigate the reason why her husband would kill himself, Stride finds himself opposed by the sheriff .. and a wall of silence from the community.

Does his suicide death have something to do with the fact that his wife is a survivor of a kidnapping several years earlier? The son of the kidnapper is a young silent teenager riding a motorbike and seemingly is following Stride. What does he know?

Book Blurb: Against his better instincts, Stride becomes enmeshed in a gruesome and suspenseful search for a local killer who knows things no one alive should know--and who may kill again to keep it that way.

The Jonathan Stride series is one of my favorites. Stride is a man of many layers. He's where he wants to be professionally, but it's his personal life that seems to be taking a hit these days. Maggie, his deputy, is a character I don't particularly care for. She comes across as a bit secretive and very manipulative when it comes to Stride.

This short read (less than 200 pages) is mysterious and suspenseful. When other bodies start to fall, Stride ferrets out the secrets like only he can. The ending was quite a surprise.

Micky Cox says

A short story from the Stride series. It doesn't have the usual cast of characters surrounding Stride, but is well plotted and has good character development to keep the story flowing. It moves at a faster pace than most of the books do, but as a short story it is not unusual to move at an advanced pace. I'm looking forward to getting back into a meatier story in the next book, but this was definitely entertaining and worth the time to listen to!

Mike Kennedy says

A short novella in the Jonathan Stride series. Stride is driving back from testifying in Milwaukee when he stops to visit the gravesite of his mother in Shawano, Wisconsin. While visiting the graveside a local sheriff's deputy pulls into the cemetery and promptly commits suicide. Stride is pulled in by his uncle to help the deputy's wife find out why her husband killed himself. This wasn't bad for a novella. I probably would've rated a four star except for the fact that I found the ending a little unfulfilling. Mr. Freeman was able to put it in a couple of his trademark twists and turns despite this being a short novella.

Roberta Bianchessi says

un thriller scorrevole e ricco di suspense, dove le carte sono sapientemente mischiate. quando si è certi di essere sulla strada giusta l'autore riesce a sconvolgere i vostri schemi, fino ad un inaspettato finale.

Jean says

The Novitiate. It sounds like a holy place, doesn't it? Believe me, in Brian Freeman's novella, "Turned to Stone," its sanctity has been violated. My first clue was the pentagram on the cover in the "o" of the word "Stone." Something terrible happened at the abandoned, burned-out building near Shawano, Wisconsin, which formerly housed an order of Catholic brothers.

Lieutenant Jonathan Stride is travelling through southeastern Wisconsin on his way home to Duluth one dark, cold April night when he is inexplicably drawn into the town of Shawano toward the cemetery where his mother is buried. As he prepares to leave her gravesite, a police car pulls in, and the unthinkable happens. Before Stride can react, the man shoots himself. Stride soon finds himself sucked into a case where he is not wanted, except that the man's widow wants an explanation. Kelli Andrews is the survivor of that horrible ordeal at the Novitiate four years earlier, and the dead cop was known as the hero who saved her and subsequently married her.

But soon there is another body, and Stride can't help himself. Even though he knows he is way out of his territory, he can't just walk away. I couldn't either. Part one ended with a single word: "Teufel." In German, it means, "devil." I gasped and then found myself holding my breath.

Stride believes in evil all right, but he knows the devil didn't commit this murder. This was the work of a human. What about the victim of the kidnapping and torture, Kelli Andrews? What does she believe? Freeman did a masterful job of casting suspicion and then turning around and creating doubt. I had bits of this puzzle figured out but not all of it. The characterization, as usual, is superb. If you're expecting more of Serena and Maggie in this one, put those thoughts out of your head. Jonathan Stride is single and regretting his mistakes, but in this story, he is only focused on the task at hand. You'd think that in a small town like Shawano there would be no secrets, but there are. Some of Freeman's characters in this book have deep, dark secrets.

Der Teufel, the devil, is a theme that snakes through the entire novella like a cold, unseen shadow, casting fear and loathing like a dank cloud that smothers the light. I must add here that I have a fear and hatred of snakes, and the frequent use of the word to describe the wind's affect on the blowing snow caught my eye; then I realized that Freeman was doing it on purpose, as another symbol of the devil. Freeman is so adept at creating mood in his writing through the use of scenery and weather. In "Turn to Stone," he draws on a real place, adds the snow, damp, and chill of the early Wisconsin springtime, and mixes it with his own unique imagination. The result is a wickedly good thriller that held me spellbound.

5 stars

Ada Iaboni says

I think this is my first book from this author and once again it's a series!

This one was on the short side, which is probably a novella not a novel. It was good. Not great and certainly not an award winning novella. It dealt with, what the characters claimed it to be, demonic possession.

However, many strange things did happen, but was it the devil?

Ed says

Brian Freeman's Lt. Jonathon Stride, Duluth, PD is one of those characters that exhibits a noble sense of integrity and justice. He's a smart detective trying to maneuver his love life while out-thinking his criminal adversaries. This outstanding novella takes a somewhat different turn when Stride stops by to visit his mother's grave in another town and witnesses a local cop commit suicide. His curiosity peaked, he is compelled to find the answer in this complex, page turning plot twister. I like Jonathon Stride because he's a good guy with heart and soul. We can't really ask any more from our fictional lead characters, can we?

Sharon says

I liked this book. My only issue is that I felt some of the Stride's investigation came too easily. He knew all the right questions to ask all the right people. I understand that he's badass but that doesn't always go over well in a story.

Labijose says

Never heard of Brian Freeman before. This is a short story (a novella), interesting enough for breaks between books. Stride, the main character, witnesses the suicide of a police officer, while he is paying a visit to dead relatives in a cemetery. Not wanting to, he becomes involved in solving why the officer did it, unleashing some hell along the way.

The end of this story leads you into his next one, "The cold nowhere", which I still don't know if I will read. But this one was quite entertaining and fast paced, and the characters were quite believable. Four stars out of five.
