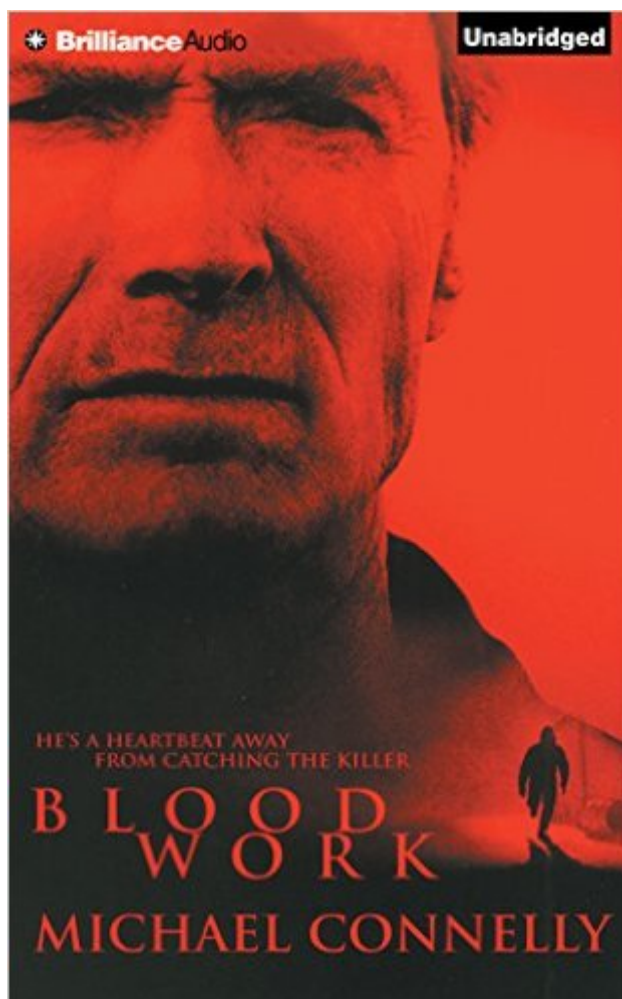


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# Blood Work



## 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

Terry McCaleb, ex-FBI profiler and serial killer point man in Los Angeles, is spending his days recuperating after a heart transplant by restoring the boat he lives on. Life consists of long daily walks, checking vital signs and taking anti-rejection medications. That is, until he looks up one day to see Graciela Rivers coming aboard with a request. She's read about his career and new heart in the paper and wants him to privately take on the murder case of her sister, Glory, who was shot in the head and killed during a convenience store robbery. At first, McCaleb says no, he's not in the business anymore, doesn't need the stress and has to take care of himself. But when she reveals that his new heart belonged to Glory, she was an organ donor, he rethinks his answer and decides to look into the case. As he starts to look at the LAPD paperwork and crime scene tape, one thing becomes very clear, things are not as they seem. The detectives working the case, missed some

important clues and it appears that Glory wasn't just at the wrong place at the wrong time, but the actual target. And as McCaleb digs deeper, he knows his new heart will never rest easy, unless he solves the crime and finds the killer..... Michael Connelly has done it again. He's written a great mystery/thriller with enough twists, turns and false starts to keep you turning pages to the very end. This is a book that has it all...a great, fast paced, suspenseful plot, well drawn, original characters and riveting scenes that come alive on the page. This is a novel you'll definitely want to read in one sitting. So turn off the phone and lock the door, Blood Work is about to keep you up all night!

I have enjoyed all the Michael Connelly books I've read lately, and Blood Work is even better than I have come to expect. While this isn't part of Connelly's Harry Bosch series, the protagonist, Terry McCaleb, has appeared in other books (including a Bosch). Terry McCaleb is a retired FBI agent whose specialty was criminal profiling. His retirement was brought on when his heart was attacked by a virus, and he eventually had a heart transplant two years later. McCaleb is a mere two months past surgery and still recovering when a beautiful woman shows up on his boat. Graciela Rivers is seeking his help. Her sister was brutally murdered in a convenience store robbery. The LAPD are not much interested and think it was a random shooting. He begs off, saying that he can't physically perform an investigation. He can't even drive for another seven months. But then Graciela plays her trump card: McCaleb received her sister's heart. McCaleb reluctantly decides to look into the case, and finds himself pitted against the LAPD and the FBI. McCaleb also discovers that this isn't a random shooting and that the killer is in fact a serial killer. In solving the crime, McCaleb also learns a lot about himself. He discovers that he misses the chase and the work. He's still got it despite his physical limitations. This case also helps to heal more than his heart. Connelly is so convincing because he writes like a cop (thanks to his years as a crime reporter). Suspects are "in the wind" (they have disappeared without a trace). Or McCaleb does the "hard tango" with other officers to get information (when they aren't willing to share). Last summer I was on a James Lee Burke kick (Dave Robicheaux) and Connelly is also a fan. It was fun to find McCaleb wearing a Robicheaux Dock and Baitshop t-shirt in one chapter. For any Connelly fan or even a lover of mysteries, it doesn't get much better than Blood Work.

This was the first Michael Connelly book I read, and because of it I have since bought five others. The plot is engaging from the very start. Ex-FBI agent Terry McCaleb, whose speciality was profiling serial killers, has retired from the Bureau after a heart transplant and is living on his boat in LA harbour. Having turned his back on fighting crime, he has no intentions of helping Graciela Rivers, a

woman whose sister has been murdered, until he finds out that the transplanted heart that saved his life belonged to her. With this knowledge, he feels obliged to investigate Gloria's death, against the express wishes of his doctor and knowing it could have serious consequences for his health. All McCaleb has to go on is a video tape from a convenience store showing a masked man hold up the owner and then shoot the two witnesses. Add to this the hostility he receives from the two LAPD detectives assigned the case, and it seems like McCaleb isn't going to get far. However, it soon becomes clear that the crime is not as random as it seems, and McCaleb is on the trail of someone a lot more sinister than an opportunistic thief. Connolly writes "Blood Work" with an unrelenting pace and a real flair for knowing exactly how to string the reader along. You'll be as hooked as one of the fish in the harbour!

I don't write these reviews often, but this book impressed me so much that I had to put in a few good words for it. I have read several of Connolly's Harry Bosch novels and had enjoyed them very much, but this one stands out from the rest. Why? First of all, Terry McCaleb is the hero of this. An ex-FBI serial killer specialist, he has a newly transplanted heart in him as the book opens. He isn't the classic pulp hero, and it makes life interesting. Second, and I won't ruin the plot by saying anything, this is extremely intelligent, a creation of lots of good reporting and crafting of a great plot. Connolly, a former LA Times reporter, shows his background when he weaves together a plot that is fascinating, believable, and full of surprises. This is among the best constructed mysteries I've ever read. So do yourself a favor and spend the few bucks -- or few cents -- it takes to purchase this book. You'll be intrigued and amazed by it.

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