



Spitting Devil

Brian Freeman

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DETECTIVE JONATHAN STRIDE IS BACK.

A third woman dead in two months.

And for the third time, Alison Malville isn't sure her husband was home all night.

When the killer sends the usual photo of his victim to the press, she sees an item of her clothing left with this body, too.

Could you believe your own husband was capable of murder? Would you turn him in?

This is exclusive to ebook, a gripping read from the acclaimed author of SPILLED BLOOD.

Spitting Devil Details

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Author : Brian Freeman

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Genre : Thriller, Mystery, Short Stories, Crime, Fiction

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From Reader Review Spitting Devil for online ebook

Helen Laycock says

This had a promising start - the author has potential, but this was much too short to stand as a novel. I felt as though I had read a short story instead as it suffered from lack of character and plot development.

Rick says

Tight and quirky short from thriller-master Freeman.

Brian Freeman says

My 16,000-word Jonathan Stride short story “Spitting Devil” is now available in the U.S. Kindle store!

This story actually began in Spain. My Spanish publisher Circulo de Lectores was preparing a crime anthology, and they asked me to submit a short story to the collection. The theme of the anthology was “the perfect crime,” and I decided to take an unusual twist on that idea. In this case, what’s been stolen is someone’s perfect life.

Alison Malville seemingly has it all. Happy marriage. Beautiful child. A lovely, expensive new house in Duluth. And yet Alison is being haunted by nightmares. Ants keep creeping into her dreams, invading her body, working their way inside her clothes.

“She dreamed of the ants almost every night now. When she closed her eyes, there they were, waiting to slip out through the walls. They had even begun to march from her sleep into her waking life. She couldn’t escape them. Wherever she went in the house, she heard them massing in the ceiling, watching her like spies.

Alison understood what was happening to her. It wasn’t about the ants at all. It was about her husband. He was driving her into madness.”

Alison is the heroine of “Spitting Devil” — but this is also a Jonathan Stride story. At the time I wrote it, I had been away from Stride for a year. I’d finished THE BURYING PLACE and was in the middle of my first Cab Bolton novel, THE BONE HOUSE. But this story gave me a chance to catch up on Stride’s life. So as Alison deals with the ants, Stride is dealing with a malevolent killer whom the media has nicknamed “Dead Red.”

“Spitting Devil” is a short story — it’s about 15% of the length of a full novel — but I think it brings a lot of depth to the format. One of my favorite comments came from a reader who wrote: ““Spitting Devil” is one of the best thriller short stories I have ever read. So scary and suspenseful. Couldn’t believe how well you developed those characters in such a short story.”

When the story was released in the UK Kindle store, it spent several weeks at #1. And now it’s finally

available in the U.S. Kindle store, too. As we get ready for two big “Stride releases” in the weeks ahead — TURN TO STONE on February 18 and THE COLD NOWHERE on April 1— “Spitting Devil” is a great way to whet your appetite for more scary twists and turns.

Want to read “Spitting Devil” in another language? It’s also available in Spanish as LA MUERTE ROJA and Italian as FORMICHE.

Sandy Adams says

Frightening....

Because it was so plausible some might find it difficult to sleep after reading this short story. I would likely have given it more stars had I read it before a more recent book by this author. If you enjoy a good, often scary story that actually keeps you guessing, I don't think you can go wrong with Mr. Friedman's books.

Ian says

This kindle freebie was my first taste of Brian Freeman. It's a good little crime thriller which kept me hooked all the way through and certainly made me want to explore a full size novel by this author. I won't give anything away, but given it's size be aware that there is little detail about the Minnesota based detective, Jonathan Stride, who is the hero of the series, but focuses on the husband and wife who are the two main characters caught in the middle of a triple murder spree.

TeriC says

Brian Freeman always write a good book. This short story fills the gap between his books.

Sharon Gigliotti says

Freeman never disappoints! As always, his books are always hard to put down. This was a great short read

Linda Strong says

Women are being murdered. When found, they are wearing clothing that doesn't belong to them. The killer sends pictures to the media. Is this a personal message to someone?

Detective Jonathan Stride receives a phone call one night from a woman who says that the clothes the murdered women are hers. They've disappeared out of her closet.

What she doesn't tell him is that her husband was not home the nights they were murdered.

If you suspected your husband of murder, what would you do? Would you turn him in? Or find some way to exonerate him?

This is a 70-page short story with Stride playing a very small role. I was a bit disappointed in that, but the story is good ... the remaining characters are developed. I did not see the ending coming at all.

If you've never read any of the Stride series, do not start with this one. Start with Immoral, the very first book in the series and read them in order. You won't be sorry!

Jane says

I was up to date on the Jonathan Stride series and eagerly awaiting the next one which I believe does not come out until Spring 2013, so I was surprised and grateful to be emailed about this short story which I downloaded for free from Amazon to my computer kindle.

Brian Freeman is my favourite male author and I have read all the Jonathan Stride series within the past 6 months or so. He is an amazing writer and tells such a brilliant story.

This short story follows on from The Burying Place and Stride is now shackled up with Maggie. I really wanted to know how these two got on and this story give some insight into where things are going.

Great little story.

Dee says

I have read and loved all of Brian Freemans books and particularly love his 'Stride' series.

I was excited to get my hands on this short story hoping it would be sufficient to keep me going until the next exciting 'Stride' installment, sadly it did not.

The entire plot was just plain weird and I didn't care for any of the characters.

That said I fully intend to read the next 'Stride' story as once it is released.

Godzilla says

A freebie from the Kindle store, I approached this optimistically, there were some sparkling reviews, both of this and the series generally.

It's fast paced, and whilst there's an attempt to lay red herrings, they just didn't really work effectively for me.

I found it hard to relate to the main characters, and was surprised at how little detail there was about the main detectives, who are apparently stalwarts of the series!

This was a relatively short tale and whilst the tension built well, the overall impression I walked away with was that it could have been so much better.

That said, I'd read another free story in the series, but I'm not convinced I'd put my hand in my pocket to pay for one.

Micky Cox says

This was a twisted little short story from the Jonathan Stride series. While it was entertaining enough and had an interesting plot, it was short on meat and development as is sometimes common in short stories. I am glad that I listened to it as it filled in the storyline a bit of Stride and Maggie post the Serena breakup and I think it will make the next books to come a bit more cohesive as it bridges the gap in the personal storyline of Stride and the women in his life. I don't think it is vital to enjoying the rest of the series to read this short, but it does add a stepping stone to the what comes next in the series plot line.

Sharon says

This short story was one of the best short stories that I've ever read. I'd say it's in my top 3. I'm impressed. Short stories rarely get 5 stars from me. Good job Mr. Freeman.

Mary Mullane says

I love Minnesota authors, and Brian Freeman is one of my favorites. This short novella is well crafted and keeps you guessing.

Jean says

Out of the mouths of babes...at the age of ten, Evan Malville isn't exactly a baby, but he blames a broken figurine on "the spitting devil." The empty juice container in the fridge? That must've been the spitting devil too. His mother Alison thinks her son is lying, acting out because of the stress in the household. In Brian Freeman's short story, Spitting Devil, Alison and her husband Michael are sleeping separately, their marriage strained.

Meanwhile, Detective Jonathan Stride and his partner Maggie Bie are working a string of murder cases. The press has dubbed killer "Dead Red." He dresses his redheaded victims in designer clothing that seems to belong to someone else.

Alison thinks the clothing looks familiar, and she is afraid. Michael no longer seems like the man she married. But is he a killer?

I am a big fan of Brian Freeman. He uses some wonderful imagery. Dreaming of ants? Lots and lots of ants? Yikes! Freeman did a great job of building suspense in this one, but I was sorry that this was a short story

and not a full novel. I love Stride, and there is not nearly enough Stride in this one. While it does bridge the gap between *The Burying Place* and *The Cold Nowhere*, the Stride-Maggie relationship feels brushed aside rather than resolved. In real life, I guess that happens, but it felt lacking somehow. There's not a lot of police action either. It's pretty much Alison's show. I give Freeman credit for that character. She's a woman on the edge of breaking – or is she? *Spitting Devil* is a quick read, but give me a full-length Freeman novel any day.

3 stars
