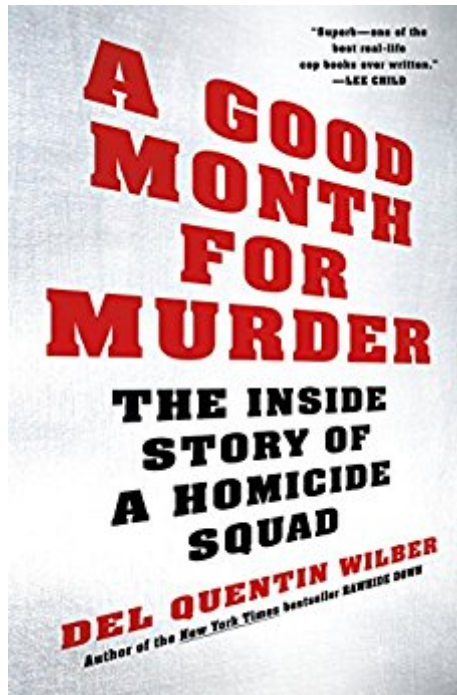


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A Good Month For Murder: The Inside Story Of A Homicide Squad



Synopsis

Bestselling author Del Quentin Wilber tells the inside story of how a homicide squad---a dedicated, colorful team of detectivesâ€”does its almost impossible job. Twelve homicides, three police-involved shootings and the furious hunt for an especially brutal killer--February 2013 was a good month for murder in suburban Washington, D.C. After gaining unparalleled access to the homicide unit in Prince George's County, which borders the nation's capital, Del Quentin Wilber begins shadowing the talented, often quirky detectives who get the call when a body falls. After a quiet couple of months, all hell breaks loose: suddenly every detective in the squad is scrambling to solve one shooting and stabbing after another. Meanwhile, the entire unit is obsessed with a stone-cold "red ball," a high-profile case involving a seventeen-year-old honor student attacked by a gunman who kicked down the door to her house and shot her in her bed. Murder is the police investigator's ultimate crucible: to solve a killing, a detective must speak for the dead. More than any recent book, *A Good Month for Murder* shows what it takes to succeed when the stakes couldn't possibly be higher.

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Customer Reviews

I always like "embedded" narratives like this one, where the writer immerses themselves in the culture. In some cases, it's first person, but in this book Del Quentin Wilber takes a step back and is an invisible observer of the inner workings of a homicide squad. It's character driven and full of anecdotes and information about the detectives and Wilber does a sharp job of conveying how they are. He did a good job of obviously observing events but keeping himself out of the narrative. I don't mind first person narration at all - but it is refreshing for the focus to be entirely outside the writer's mind. Here, the attention is all on the good guys and the bad guys. This is a solid book for true crime or urban crime fans - and does a good job of capturing the frustration, black humor, and grinding nature of a detective's career. Especially in a setting where people aren't eager or willing to help the police, it shows how difficult the job can be. That is the one area the book lacks that the book "Ghettoside" provides. So people don't want to "snitch?" Okay - but why? This book doesn't delve quite deeply into the social situation and the backstory for why the police are not seen as "honest brokers" by the citizens. Is it because of years of racism? Of corruption? Of police just hassling people instead of truly protecting neighborhoods? I don't know. So it's not entirely fair to the residents - because if you're a reader you're like "they should help the cops!" And of course they should - but there's more to the story than just these few, dedicated homicide detectives. So I would recommend this book in addition to others, but not as the only entry in this type of library.

Twenty-eight days and nights of February 2013, in Prince George's County, Maryland, following the Homicide Unit, is a month of sleep deprivation, misery and some success. The author, Del Quentin Wilber, has worked as a crime reporter for the Baltimore Sun and The Washington Post. He has always been interested in crime reporting and was a big fan of David Simon's book 'Homicide'. He was interested in how detective work has changed since 'Homicide' was written. He approached the police chief of Prince George's County, and was given permission to embed with the Homicide Unit. 25 detectives were working cases during the period Wilber was embedded, but he finally concentrated on the twenty-eight days in February. February 2013 was a good month for murder in Prince George's County, 12 killings, after a very dry spell in January. These twenty-eight days stressed and stretched the Homicide Unit like never before. 16 hour days, sometimes more at a stretch. No time off, very little time for any family events. What Wilber found was the concentrated efforts of a group of detectives who liked their jobs, and the goal was to find the murderer of each victim. As Wilber followed the detectives, he became the voice of the unit. We meet the detectives, they work in pairs with partners. These are dedicated men and women, working long hours, often

grabbing a nap where they can, eating on the run, keeping in touch with families by phone or text messages. This is a fascinating look at the inner workings of a homicide unit, how the detectives function, their personal lives, and most important of all, how they deal with the stress of their job. Focusing on murders, shot, beaten, strangled, murdered in ways we may never think of. Prince George's County is a 'microcosm of the new America.

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