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Body Double
Synopsis

Boston medical examiner Dr. Maura Isles literally meets her match and must face a savage serial killer and shattering personal revelations in the brilliant new novel of suspense by the New York Times bestselling author of The Surgeon and The Sinner. Dr. Maura Isles makes her living dealing with death. As a pathologist in a major metropolitan city, she has seen more than her share of corpses every day—many of them victims of violent murder. But never before has her blood run cold, and never has the grim expression "dead ringer" rung so terrifyingly true. Because never before has the lifeless body on the medical examiner's table been her own. Yet there can be no denying the mind-reeling evidence before her shocked eyes and those of her colleagues, including Detective Jane Rizzoli: the woman found shot to death outside Maura's home is the mirror image of Maura, down to the most intimate physical nuances. Even more chilling is the discovery that they share the same birth date and blood type. For the stunned Maura, an only child, there can be just one explanation. And when a DNA test confirms that Maura's mysterious doppelgänger is in fact her twin sister, an already bizarre murder investigation becomes a disturbing and dangerous excursion into a past full of dark secrets. Searching for answers, Maura is drawn to a seaside town in Maine where other horrifying surprises await. But perhaps more frightening, an unknown murderer is at large on a cross-country killing spree. To stop the massacre and uncover the twisted truth about her own roots, Maura must probe her first living subject: the mother that she never knew...an icy and cunning woman who could be responsible for giving Maura life—and who just may have a plan to take it away.

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In the prologue to Gerritsen's latest Maura Isles/Jane Rizzoli thriller, a bullied, unhappy schoolgirl is lured into the woods by a handsome classmate and then cast into a pit to die. Gerritsen then switches to Isles, a Boston medical examiner, returning from a Paris conference (where she takes us on an eerie tour of the catacombs) to find Homicide Detective Rizzoli among the cops on her front lawn, blue lights flashing, shocked to see her. They've just been examining her murdered corpse. Having got your attention some writers might have trouble maintaining this front-loaded pace, but Gerritsen deepens the mystery then ratchets up the suspense and horror right to the final nail-biting page. Isles' character emerges through her actions. She is wary of introspection and her shock at her double's murder shows in her altered view of daily details and her dogged pursuit of the mystery wherever it leads, be it an isolated Maine cabin with human bones in the ground outside, or a maximum security prison. Isles, adopted, has found her twin too late. As she begins to peel away the layers of family identity, similarities strike her - a failed marriage, a career in science. But these poignant revelations are soon disrupted by far more sinister implications. Rizzoli, eight months pregnant and working on the murder, has found Isles' mother, maybe. And she's not a mother to love. Meanwhile there's a serial killer at work, one the reader is aware of before the cops. His latest victim is the very pregnant wife of a slimy BMW car dealer. Snatched from her home, she wakes up in a coffin-like box where we revisit her from time to time until she goes into labor - the moment the killer has been waiting for.

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