

# Death by Blunt Instrument

*Canadian thriller writer among world's best*

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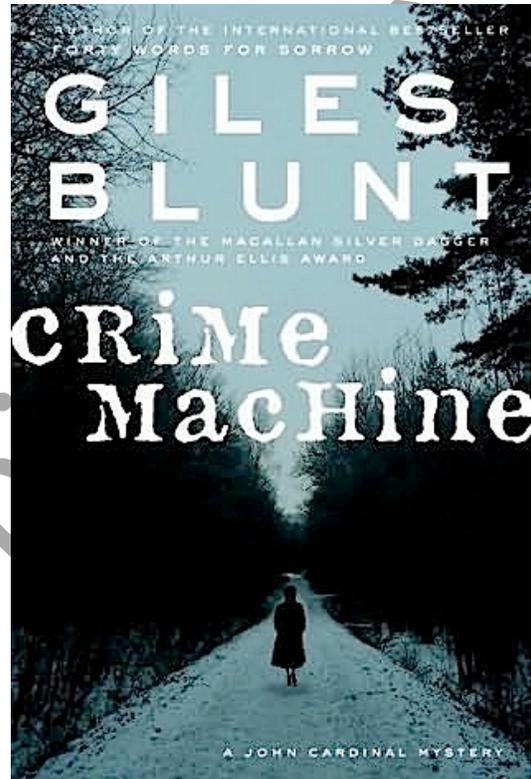
*Suspended Sentences*

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*by Jim Napier*

It is human nature to seek safety and security in our lives. The quest probably begins at birth and is nurtured by hundreds, if not thousands, of details extending over our entire lives: the familiar faces of our schoolmates, the comforting smile of a teacher, the parent who greets us with open arms, who attends our wounds, puts food on the table before us, and tucks us in at night and who, if we are lucky, guides us with words of wisdom into middle age. Whether we choose to live in a large, cosmopolitan city, a small town, or in a remote cabin somewhere deep in the wilderness, we seek security from those around us. So it is all the more menacing when we discover that among the thousands of people with whom we interact over our lifetimes may lurk someone who does not wish us well, who does not play by the same rules as most people, and who might, in fact, use the face of a kindly stranger to mask the heart of a killer.

Canadian crime writer Giles Blunt knows how to explore that primal fear to good effect. The author of more than half a dozen taut and terrifying tales, Blunt has perfected the fine art of sending a chill up his readers' spines, grounded in a storyline that seems all too real. His talents have earned Blunt a global following of readers who eagerly await his most recent foray into the dark recesses of the human soul, and his latest effort will not disappoint.



## *Giles Blunt*

The son of two determinably-British immigrants to Canada, Giles Blunt was relegated to a Northern Ontario Catholic boy's school before convincing his parents to allow him to migrate to a coed school where, predictably, his attendance improved. Moving to New York City in 1980 he met and subsequently married an American woman and worked in a succession of jobs, including bartender and hotel worker, before landing a gig as a screenwriter of police dramas. His scriptwriting credits include episodes of the series *Night Heat*, *Street Legal*, and

*Law and Order.* His childhood experience must not have scarred him too deeply, for a few years ago he and his wife Janna returned to Canada, and they now make their home in Toronto.

After penning two excellent standalone novels, Blunt has recently returned to his outstanding series of tales centering on the exploits of police detective sergeant John Cardinal, and it is a welcome return indeed. Previous novels in the series have been shortlisted for Anthony, Macavity, and two Dagger awards, and garnered Blunt the CWA's Macallan Silver Dagger as well as the Arthur Ellis Award for Best Canadian Novel of 2005.

*The Globe and Mail's* Margaret Cannon has described Blunt as a master storyteller, and with good reason: his stories are exquisitely-crafted, compelling tales that will keep you on the edge of your seat, almost daring you to put the book down unfinished. They weave original and engaging characters with a convincing sense of place, and effectively put paid to the hoary cliché, embraced by too many agents and editors, that books set in Canada won't attract a wide audience.

***The Crime Machine***  
**(Random House Canada, 2010)**

Detective John Cardinal is based in the fictional Northern Ontario town of Algonquin Bay, where for years he supported his wife Catherine in her ongoing struggle with bipolar disease. When she plunged to her death from a newly-constructed high-rise Cardinal was overcome with grief and guilt, not made any easier by the fact that he was the first investigating officer on the scene, and it fell to him to identify the victim as his wife. Not surprisingly a year later Cardinal is still coming to terms with the tragedy, aided by his

longtime friend and partner, Sergeant Lise Delorme.

To ease the transition Cardinal has been assigned a cold-case file reaching back more than three decades. The task seems hopeless, but every inch a policeman, he delves into it. Cardinal's efforts are interrupted when the bodies of two American visitors to Algonquin Bay are found beheaded in a secluded cottage, and for reasons of her own the only witness to the killings is afraid to come forward. Drawn into the ensuing investigation Cardinal is soon dogged by an FBI agent sent to look into the deaths of the Americans and a persistent out-of-town reporter who seems to know more about the case than the police.

When the heads of the victims are found displayed on the railing of the town wharf, it's apparent that Algonquin Bay is faced with a very twisted and formidable adversary, and soon Cardinal begins to suspect there is a link between the recent deaths and his cold case.

***A skillful blend of police procedural and terror tale***

*The Crime Machine* is Giles Blunt's fifth novel featuring John Cardinal, and it confirms his position among the very best of contemporary thriller writers world-wide. Skillfully blending the details of a convincing police procedural and a rivetting terror tale with an unexpected twist near the end, Blunt weaves an intricate and original saga around the engaging detective and his partner, effortlessly integrated into a seamless narrative. No one pays more attention to his craft, and to better effect. If by some chance you haven't yet discovered this supremely talented author, do yourself a favour.

The Sherbrooke *Record*, Friday, August 20, 2010

To read more about Giles Blunt, or for other similar writers, go to <http://deadlydiversions.com/> and click on Authors or Genres.

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