

Toronto Tale

Police detective implicated in Hogtown Homicide

Suspended Sentences

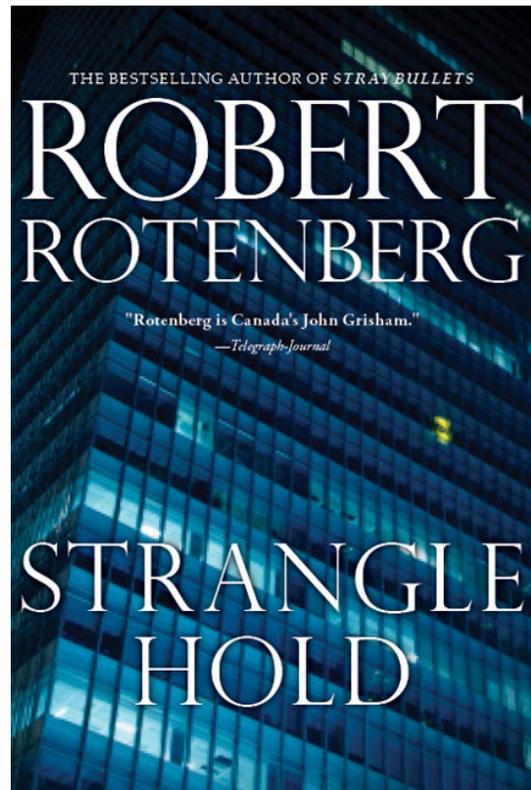
by Jim Napier

It's the silly season in Toronto. The flamboyant and popular police chief, Hap Charlton, is running for mayor, and homicide detective Ari Greene is riding a motor scooter along Kingston Road, on his way to an assignation with a married woman in a seedy motel. The woman in question is none other than Jennifer Raglan, Toronto's head Crown Attorney. It's not merely a roll in the hay, however; Jennifer is planning to leave her husband Howard and enter an open relationship with Greene.

But when Greene arrives at the Maple Leaf Motel he finds Jennifer's lifeless body. She's been brutally strangled, and very recently. Summoning his police instincts Greene kicks in the bathroom door, but the killer is nowhere to be found.

Hearing a sound in the hallway, he runs to the door, only to see the heel of a shoe disappearing around a corner. He runs to the street, but the person has disappeared.

Already in the distance Greene notices the sirens of an approaching police cruiser and an ambulance, and realizes that something



doesn't make sense. According to his phone the time is 10:44, but the response time for an emergency call like this would be seven or eight minutes. No more than three minutes has passed since Ari first entered the room.

Someone had phoned in her death in before Greene had arrived.

The detective realizes that he will be the obvious suspect in the case, so he flees the scene, wiping his prints from his scooter and leaving it in a nearby alley where it's sure to be nicked by some petty thief.

So begins the tortured odyssey of Ari Greene, as he struggles to conceal his own involvement with the victim even while he strives to solve the mystery of her death. In a quirk of fate that could have been orchestrated by the gods, the case is assigned to Greene's own protégé in homicide, Daniel Kennicott. This is the very first murder investigation that the younger detective will lead. He's anxious to have Ari's help, but only unofficially; he doesn't want to undermine his own credibility with the other officers. This presents Greene with an opportunity to follow the progress of the case—at least until his own involvement with the victim is discovered.

And then, he knows, things will get a lot worse.

The case is assigned to Angela Kreitinger, a former rising star in Toronto's Crown's office. Her career had been tarnished by mis-

handling a high-profile case a few years earlier; now she's been summoned back from the boon-docks to lead the prosecution's case against detective Greene, who's been arrested for Jennifer Raglan's murder. Fighting a past that included substance abuse problems, Kreitinger is determined to convict Greene, restore her reputation, and cement her place among her colleagues in the Crown's office. And she is equally determined that nothing, absolutely nothing, will stand in her way.

Written before the bizarre escapades of Toronto's real-life mayor became known, *Stranglehold* has an eerie prescience. If that were all there was to the story it would be an entertaining, if already-dated, tale. But Rotenberg goes well beyond the bare bones of the plot to weave the informed saga of a flawed police investigation coupled with the intricate dance of skilled courtroom lawyers, each striving to prevail. It is a compelling story, perfectly told, and will keep readers glued to the book until the very last page.

Robert Rotenberg, *Stranglehold*
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Since 2005 Jim Napier's reviews and interviews have appeared in several Canadian

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