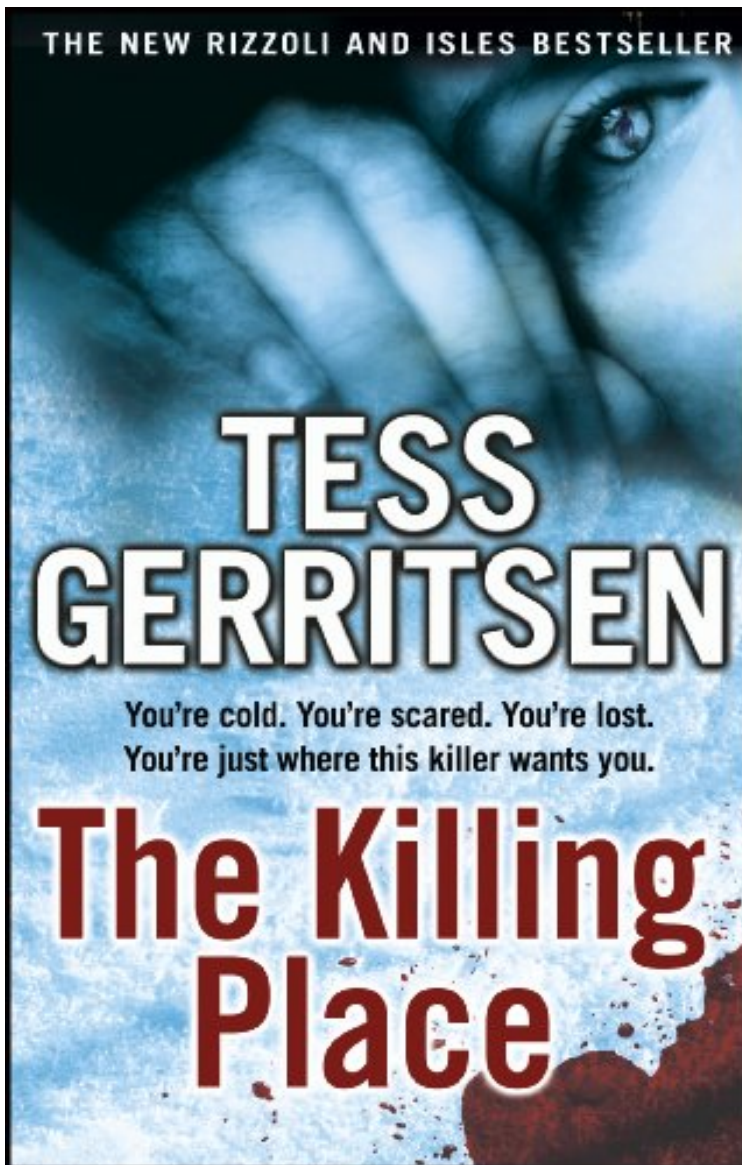


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## The Killing Place: (Rizzoli Isles series 8)



*Par Tess Gerritsen*  
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### Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurHE WATCHES Something terrible has happened in the snowbound village of Kingdom Come, Wyoming. Twelve eerily identical houses stand dark and abandoned. The people who lived in them appear to have vanished, seemingly into thin air. HE WAITS Maura Isles is driving through the area with a group of friends when they find themselves trapped in a snowstorm. They stumble into the abandoned village to take shelter. But their nightmare has only just begun. THEY DISAPPEAR Days later, Jane Rizzoli flies to Wyoming to search for her missing friend. A crashed vehicle has been found with four badly burned bodies still inside. Can one of the corpses be Mauras? Janes hunt for the truth leads her to Kingdom Come. Where the person who was watching Maura now lies waiting for her ExtraitChapter OnePlain of Angels,

IdahoShe was the chosen one. For months, he had been studying the girl, ever since she and her family had moved into the compound. Her father was George Sheldon, a mediocre carpenter who worked with the construction crew. Her mother, a bland and forgettable woman, was assigned to the communal bakery. Both had been unemployed and desperate when they first wandered into his church in Idaho Falls, seeking solace and salvation. Jeremiah had looked into their eyes, and he saw what he needed to see: lost souls in search of an anchor, any anchor. They had been ripe for the harvest. Now the Sheldons and their daughter, Katie, lived in Cottage C, in the newly built Calvary cluster. Every Sabbath, they sat in their assigned pew in the fourteenth row. In their front yard they had planted hollyhocks and sunflowers, the same cheery plants that adorned all the other front gardens. In so many ways, they blended in with the other sixty-four families in The Gathering, families who labored together, worshiped together, and, every Sabbath evening, broke bread together. But in one important way, the Sheldons were unique. They had an extraordinarily beautiful daughter. The daughter whom he could not stop staring at. From his window, Jeremiah could see her in the school yard. It was noon recess, and students milled about outside, enjoying the warm September day, the boys in their white shirts and black pants, the girls in their long pastel dresses. They all looked healthy and sun-kissed, as children ought to look. Even among those swan-like girls, Katie Sheldon stood out, with her irrepressible curls and her bell-like laughter. How quickly girls change, he thought. In a single year, she had transformed from a child into a willowy young woman. Her bright eyes, gleaming hair, and rosy cheeks were all signs of fertility. She stood among a trio of girls in the shade of a bur oak tree. Their heads were bent together like the Three Graces whispering secrets. Around them swirled the energy of the school yard, where students chattered and played hopscotch and kicked around a soccer ball. Suddenly he noticed a boy crossing toward the three girls, and he frowned. The boy was about fifteen, with a thatch of blond hair and long legs that had already outgrown his trousers. Halfway across the yard, the boy paused, as though gathering up the courage to continue. Then his head lifted and he walked directly toward the girls. Toward Katie. Jeremiah pressed closer to the window. As the boy approached, Katie looked up and smiled. It was a sweet and innocent smile, directed at a classmate who almost certainly had only one thing on his mind. Oh yes, Jeremiah could guess what was in that boy's head. Sin. Filth. They were speaking now, Katie and the boy, as the other two girls knowingly slipped away. He could not hear their conversation through the noise of the school yard, but he saw the attentive tilt of Katie's head, the coquettish way she flicked her hair off her shoulder. He saw the boy lean in, as though sniffing and savoring her scent. Was that the McKinnon brat? Adam or Alan or something. There were so many families now living in the compound, and so many children, that he could not remember all their names. He glared down at the two of them, gripping the window frame so tightly that his nails dug into the paint. He pivoted and walked out of his office, thumping down the stairs. With every step, his jaw clenched tighter and acid burned a hole in his stomach. He banged out of the building, but outside the school yard gate he halted, wrestling for control. This would not do. To show anger was unseemly. The school bell clanged, calling the students in from recess. He stood calming himself, inhaling deeply. He focused on the fragrance of fresh-cut hay, of bread baking in the nearby communal kitchen. From across the compound, where the new worship hall was being built, came the whine of a saw and the echoes of a dozen hammers pounding nails. The virtuous sounds of honest labor, of a community working toward His greater glory. And I am their shepherd, he thought; I lead the way. Look how far they had already come! It took only a glance around the burgeoning village, at the dozen new homes under construction, to see that the congregation was thriving. At last, he opened the gate and stepped into the school yard. He walked past the elementary classroom, where children were singing the alphabet song, and entered the classroom for the middle grades. The teacher saw him and jumped up from her desk in surprise. Prophet Goode, what an honor! she gushed. I didn't know you would be visiting us today. He smiled, and the woman reddened, delighted by his attention. Sister Janet, there's no need to make a fuss over me. I simply wanted to stop in and say hello to your class. And see if everyone is enjoying the new school year. She beamed at her students. Isn't it an honor to have Prophet Goode himself visiting us? Everyone, please welcome him! Welcome, Prophet Goode, the students answered in unison. Is the school year going well for all of you? he asked. Yes, Prophet Goode. Again in unison, so perfect it sounded as if it had been rehearsed. Katie Sheldon, he noticed, sat in the third row. He also noticed that the blond boy who had flirted with her sat almost directly behind her. Slowly he began to pace the classroom, nodding and smiling as he surveyed the students' drawings and essays tacked on the walls. As if he really cared about them. His attention was only on Katie, who sat demurely at her desk, her gaze tipped downward like any properly modest girl. I don't mean to interrupt your lesson, he said. Please, continue what you were doing. Pretend I'm

not here. Um, yes. The teacher cleared her throat. Students, if you could please open your math books to page two oh three. Complete exercises ten through sixteen. And when you're finished, we'll go over the answers. As pencils scratched and papers rustled, Jeremiah wandered the classroom. The students were too intimidated to look at him, and they kept their eyes focused on their desktops. The subject was algebra, something that he had never bothered to master. He paused by the desk of the blond lad who had so clearly shown an interest in Katie, and, looking over the boy's shoulder, he saw the name written on the workbook. Adam McKinnon. A troublemaker who would eventually have to be dealt with. He moved on to Katie's desk, where he stopped and watched over her shoulder. Nervously she scribbled an answer, then erased it. A patch of bare neck showed through a parting of her long hair, and the skin flushed a deep red, as though seared by his gaze. Leaning close, he inhaled her scent, and heat flooded his loins. There was nothing as delicious as the scent of a young girl's flesh, and this girl was the sweetest of all. Through the fabric of her bodice, he could just make out the swell of newly budding breasts. Don't fret too much, dear, he whispered. I was never very good at algebra, either. She looked up, and the smile she gave him was so enchanting that he was struck speechless. Yes. This girl is definitely the one. Flowers and ribbons draped the pews and cascaded from the soaring beams of the newly built worship hall. There were so many flowers that the room looked like the Garden of Eden itself, fragrant and shimmering. As the morning light beamed in through the ocular windows, two hundred joyous voices sang hymns of praise. We are yours, O Lord. Fruitful is your flock and bountiful your harvest. The voices faded, and the organ suddenly played a fanfare. The congregation turned to look at Katie Sheldon, who stood frozen in the doorway, blinking in confusion at all the eyes staring at her. She wore the lace-trimmed white dress that her mother had sewn, and her brand-new white satin slippers peeped out beneath the hem. On her head was a maiden's crown of white roses. The organ played on, and the congregation waited expectantly, but Katie could not move. She did not want to move. It was her father who forced her to take the first step. He took her by the arm, his fingers digging into her flesh with an unmistakable command. Don't you dare embarrass me. She began to walk, her feet numb in the pretty satin slippers as she moved toward the altar looming ahead. Toward the man whom God Himself had proclaimed would be her husband. She caught glimpses of familiar faces in the pews: her teachers, her friends, her neighbors. There was Sister Diane who worked in the bakery with her mother, and Brother Raymond, who tended the cows whose soft flanks she loved to pet. And there was her mother, standing in the very first pew, where she had never stood before. It was a place of honor, a row where only the most favored congregants could sit. Her mother looked proud, oh so proud, and she stood as regal as a queen wearing her own crown of roses. Mommy, Katie whispered. Mommy. But the congregation had launched into a new hymn, and no one heard her through the singing. At the altar, her father at last released her arm. Be good, he muttered, and he stepped away to join her mother. She turned to follow him, but her escape was cut off. Prophet Jeremiah Goode stood in her way. He took her hand. How hot his fingers felt against her chilled skin. And how large his hand looked, wrapped around hers, as though she were trapped in the grip of a giant. The congregation began to sing the wedding song. Joyful union, blessed in heaven, bound forever in His eyes! Prophet Goode tugged her close beside him, and she gave a whimper o... *Revue de presse* Unpredictable twists help propel Gerritsen's winning eighth novel featuring Boston medical examiner Maura Isles and homicide detective Jane Rizzoli (after *The Keepsake*). While in Wyoming late one fall for a pathologists' conference, Maura agrees to join an old college acquaintance, his 13-year-old daughter, and two friends of his on a last-minute ski trip. When an accident stalls their SUV on a remote mountain road, the fivesome take refuge in an abandoned village, Kingdom Come, the home of a religious sect led by a charismatic prophet, Jeremiah Goode. But what drove the residents from their 12 identical houses, leaving food on the table and pets behind? When the local police find what they believe to be Maura's charred body and those of her four companions, Jane; her FBI agent husband, Gabriel Dean; and Fr. Daniel Brophy travel to Wyoming to conduct their own investigation. Gerritsen supplies plenty of depth in both plot and characters. TNT launches a new TV series based on this series in July.--Publishers Weekly