



## Scratch a Woman

*Laura Lippman*

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## Scratch a Woman Laura Lippman

*New York Times* bestselling author Laura Lippman has been hailed as one of the best crime fiction writers in America today, winning virtually every major award in the genre. The author of the enormously popular series featuring Baltimore P.I. Tess Monaghan as well as three critically lauded stand-alone novels, Lippman now turns her attention to short stories—and reveals another level of mastery.

Lippman sets many of the stories in this sterling anthology, *Hardly Knew Her*, in familiar territory: her beloved Baltimore, from downtown to its affluent suburbs, where successful businessmen go to shocking lengths to protect what they have or ruthlessly expand their holdings, while dissatisfied wives find murderous ways to escape their lives. But Lippman is also unafraid to travel—to New Orleans, to an unnamed southwestern city, and even to Dublin, the backdrop for the lethal clash of two not-so-innocents abroad. Tess Monaghan is here, in two stories and a profile, aligning herself with various underdogs. And in her extraordinary, never-before-published novella, *Scratch a Woman*, Lippman takes us deep into the private world of a high-priced call girl/madam and devoted soccer mom, exploring the mystery of what may, in fact, be written in the blood.

Each of these ingenious tales is a gem—sometimes poignant, sometimes humorous, always filled with delightfully unanticipated twists and reversals. For people who have yet to read Lippman, get ready to experience the spellbinding power of "one of today's most pleasing storytellers, hailed for her keen psychological insights and her compelling characterizations," (*San Diego Union-Tribune*), who has "invigorated the crime fiction arena with smart, innovative, and exciting work" (George Pelecanos). As for longtime devotees of her multiple award-winning novels, you'll discover that you hardly know her.

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