

Mysteries and Music

RICKBLECHTA.COM

FALL 2006

"This fifth novel by musician and novelist Rick Blechta is his best, and after *Cemetery of the Nameless*, that's saying a lot. *When Hell Freezes Over* has a most engaging pair of investigators, a complex plot that moves between Toronto and Britain, and a fascinating view of the behind-the-music machinations of the big business of rock music." — *Globe and Mail*

You can't run away forever...

The protagonist of Rick Blechta's taut, new musical mystery is Michael Quinn, former rock star. Twenty-four years earlier, he turned his back on a band which was on the verge of superstardom, and has spent his life since then hiding from everything he'd once been.

Stopped at a red light one night, his passenger door is wrenched open and a woman jumps in. Two thugs are racing down the street after her. Faced with having to get "involved", Michael does "the right thing" and races off into the night with the woman.

But doing so sets in motion a chain of events which ultimately lands Michael in big trouble. A close friend is brutally murdered and the girl disappears. Then he discovers that everything she told him about herself was a lie – or was it?

He hires an idiosyncratic private investigator who, after picking up the girl's trail, begins to realize the quarry is not at all what she seems. The situation becomes deadly serious for them both when the thugs come looking for Michael. They want something the girl has and he is the last one to have seen her. What are they after? Only by finding her can that question be answered and maybe, just maybe, get Michael out of a hole that's getting bigger with every passing moment. Will he finally get out only when hell freezes over?

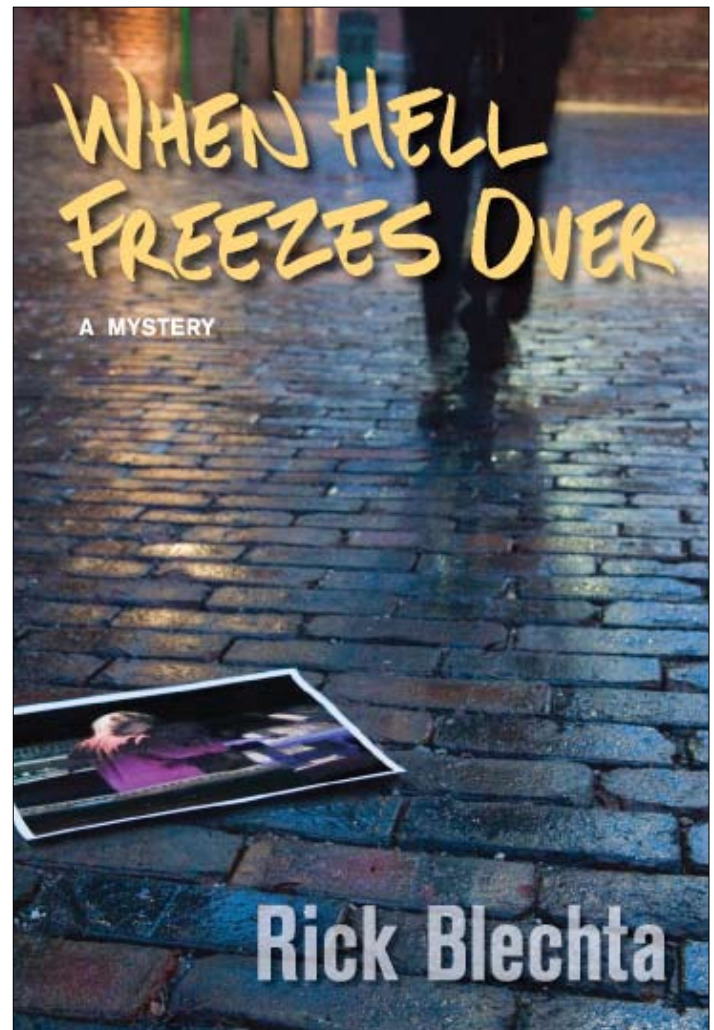
At its heart, *When Hell Freezes Over* is a story about trust, and how, when trust is broken or denied, bad things can happen. Rick talks about the book:

"My protagonist in this novel, Michael Quinn, has not put his trust in anyone for a very long time – and it has seriously damaged him. At the beginning of the story, he's forced into doing something he's now avoided for half of his life: getting involved. Is he repaid in kind? Does his existence become better because he's finally trusted someone again?

"As always, I've used music as the canvas on which I've drawn my story. This time out I dipped into what Joni Mitchell in her song 'Free Man in Paris' so aptly called, 'the

star maker machinery behind the popular song'. Do readers have to know anything about rock music or even like it? Simply put, no. What I've tried to do is take you behind the scenes just enough to catch the flavour, sort of 'This is how a rock band functions, what goes on when there are large amounts of money and celebrity thrown at a group of young lads. Here's how everything happens, folks'."

After you've read the book, enter our contest. Lots of great prizes! Visit www.rickblechta.com for details.



Rick's previous novel, *Cemetery of the Nameless*, was a finalist for the 2006 Arthur Ellis Best Novel Award

“This new novel by Rick Blechta is excellent. Whether it’s the terrific plot or the spectacular location, or just plain good writing, the book is hard to put down.” — *Globe and Mail*

Have you ever desired something so much, you would do anything to get it?

Victoria Morgan, violin virtuoso extraordinaire, is on yet another European tour. While playing to a full house in Vienna’s famous “Golden Hall”, Tory abruptly stops her concert, walks off the stage and disappears into the night, leaving behind an angry and puzzled audience. Why would someone so intent on her career do something so damaging?

Tory’s decision to leave soon proves to be fatal when she is accused of the brutal murder of a wealthy and powerful Austrian aristocrat. While the press hounds anyone who knows her for answers, it appears Tory is running from them, the police and even her long-suffering husband, Rocky. Or is she?

At the heart of the story is a mysterious violin concerto of incredible worth. Is it truly by Beethoven? Was Tory really going to be the first to perform this dream piece, or were these things just promises used to bait a trap?

Now it looks as if it’s up to Rocky to help save Tory from herself and also to figure out who is committing the growing number of murders – if it isn’t his wife.

The fact that Rick Blechta has been a musician all his life is clearly evident in his writing. He brings his musician’s viewpoint to the thriller genre in much the same way Dick Francis has used his experiences in the horse-racing world. All three previous Blechta novels, *Knock on Wood* (1992), *The Lark Ascending* (1993) and *Shooting Straight in the Dark* (2002), have been critically praised for the insider’s knowledge of the music world which he injects into his plots. Equally praised have been his engaging and memorable characters.

“*Cemetery of the Nameless* was a great book to do research – and believe me there was a lot involved! Vienna

is a truly magical place and I’ve tried to bring that out in the story. But underneath the gaiety and glamour, the city also has a darker side. Bad things can happen there and the ghosts of the past often walk abroad. This is what takes place in *Cemetery*. But ultimately it’s a tale about deceit, manipulation and the tragedy these things can easily cause. When this happens, you can never be sure who the victim really is.”

RendezVous Crime, ISBN 1-894917-17-0, \$16.95

