

TWO BOOKS • TWO MONTHS • TWO KILLERS • ONE CITY

BESTSELLING AUTHOR MARY BURTON FOLLOWS HER SUCCESSFUL "COMPELLING THRILLER,"* DYING SCREAM WITH BACK-TO-BACK SUSPENSE IN SENSELESS, ON SALE IN JANUARY AND MERCILESS, ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

Richmond Novelist Burton Switches It Up For SENSELESS, The First Of Her Novels To Feature Her Alexandria, Virginia Homicide Unit

Praise for SENSELESS—

"Steig Larsson fans will find a lot to like in Burton's taut, well-paced novel...Burton (*Dead Ringer*) surrounds her appealing protagonist with a strong supporting cast."

—Publishers Weekly

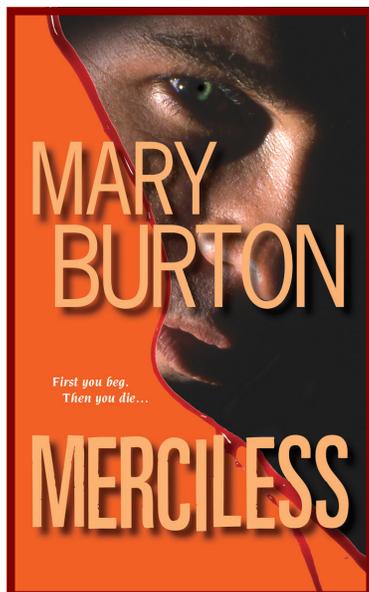
"A fast-paced thriller with a touch of romance. With hard-edged, imperfect but memorable characters, a complex plot, and no-nonsense dialog, this excellent novel will appeal to fans of Lisa Gardner and Lisa Jackson."

—Library Journal

"Dark, intense and twisted, Burton's writing leaves an indelible mark on the genre...Senseless takes readers on a dark journey into the heroine's horrific past. Powerful characterization and expertly calculated plotting will have readers at Burton's mercy, turning the pages anxious to read what happens next."

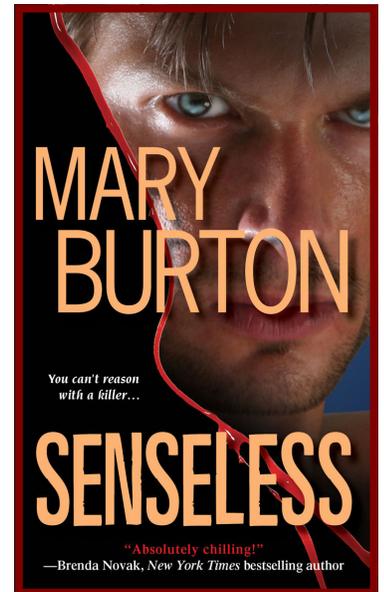
—RT Book Reviews

New York Times and USA Today bestselling author Mary Burton kept the murder rate soaring in her hometown of Richmond, Virginia for three years as each of her recent highly-praised suspense novels was published. Now, it's Alexandria's turn. Burton raises the city's 2011 homicide statistics by six before the groundhog even thinks about seeing a shadow, when **SENSELESS** and **MERCILESS** are published back-to-back in January and February.

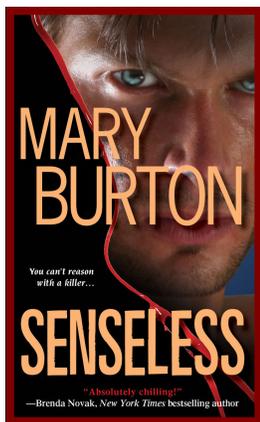


The people of Mary's Alexandria, Virginia Homicide Unit, including Detectives Deacon Garrison and Malcolm Kier, are just one of the connections between her stories. Protagonists Eva Rayburn, a convicted felon, and her half-sister Angie Carlson, a high-profile, high-priced criminal attorney, are part of both stories, as is King's, a no-nonsense neighborhood bar, and Alexandria's unique mixture of history, prosperity and poverty. As always, Burton's careful use of forensic detail is evident in each book, a result of her commitment to remain current with science and law enforcement evidence collection procedures.

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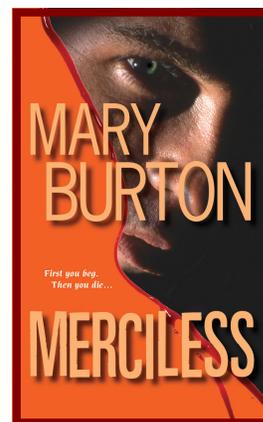
In **SENSELESS**, Eva Rayburn has cobbled together a living of sorts as a part-time waitress and bartender, process server, and night attendant at Hannah’s House, a homeless shelter. It is the latter that brings her to the attention of homicide detective Deacon Garrison when a fire destroys the shelter. Though everyone escapes the fire, the body of a woman who has been tortured and murdered is discovered in the yard. She has been branded. Four-pointed stars encircle her navel. That’s what brings crime journalist Connor Donovan into the picture. An anonymous tip alerts him to the branding and the fire. Both are hallmarks of the Sorority House Murder, the case he covered a decade ago that put him on the journalistic map.



The Sorority House Murder and the subsequent fire ended Eva’s life as she knew it. Josiah Cross had raped her, and she remembered struggling, but after that had no clear memory of what happened. Eva, portrayed as a heart-sick scholarship student who became enraged when her rich boyfriend broke up with her, was charged, convicted, and sentenced to ten years in prison. The single star burned into her shoulder is a memento of those lost hours. Thanks to Connor, Eva is back in the media spotlight, her life an open book. Meanwhile, Garrison is certain she has something to do with murder at the shelter.

As the killer’s confidence grows, another death occurs. Garrison wants answers. He’s determined to find the connection the victims share with a dead rich-kid-rapist and the girl convicted of killing him. Eva wants answers, too. She wants to remember every second of that fateful day. It’s been ten years and now—finally—she’s ready to fight for herself—even if it means dying.

Burton ratchets up the suspense yet again in **MERCILESS** in which Detective Malcolm Kier and Angie Carlson come up against a brutal, brilliant psychopath who leaves behind the gleaming white and perfectly preserved bones of his victims. Kier—and most of Alexandria law enforcement—believes the murderer is Dr. James Dixon. They blame Angie Carlson for setting him free when she defended him at an earlier murder trial during which he was acquitted. Today, Angie’s not at all sure of Dixon’s innocence and is becoming more and more convinced that the police may be right—she helped let loose a killer. As lead after lead dead-ends a young man claiming to be Eva Rayburn’s half-brother shows up, bringing with him their dead father’s diary. Suddenly, two things are shockingly clear—the killer has always intended to make Angie his ultimate victim, and his madness has roots going back to the Sorority House Murder over a decade ago.



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In **SENSELESS** and **MERCILESS**, Mary Burton once again brings readers stories enhanced by inexplicable crimes, complex relationships and the strong sense of place they've come to expect and applaud, even as they are kept guessing as to whom among her suspects may be guilty and why.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A Central Virginia native whose family's Richmond roots run as deep as the nation's, New York Times and USA Today bestselling author Mary Burton also resided in Alexandria, Virginia, where she is now setting her novels **SENSELESS** (January 2011) and **MERCILESS** (February 2011). She graduated from Virginia's Hollins University and began a career in marketing. After a decade she left her job and began writing. Her first novel, a romance, was published in 2000.



Following that book, Burton wrote sixteen novels and novellas for Harlequin and Silhouette before entering the dark world of multiple murderers and their motives with **Senseless, Merciless, Dying Scream, Dead Ringer** and **I'm Watching You**, as well as her novella ***Christmas Past***, which appears in the 2008 New York Times bestselling holiday anthology **Silver Bells**.

Her commitment to realism has led to eye-opening interviews with law enforcement, to forensic seminars and to the firing range. She is a graduate of the Henrico County Citizens Police Academy and the Richmond FBI Citizen's Academy, and has participated in Sisters in Crime's Forensic University program. Recently, she attended the Writers Police Academy in Jamestown, North Carolina. There she attended seminars on autopsies, undercover work and the motives behind murder.

Mary Burton is an avid baker and an accomplished cook. When not writing, researching or baking, Mary practices yoga, enjoys her miniature dachshunds Buddy and Bella, volunteers at the University of Richmond's Culinary Arts Program, attends professional conferences, and visits with readers and booksellers.

Mary Burton is now at work on her next novel set in Alexandria.

***Night Owl Romance**

SENSELESS
Mary Burton
Zebra Books/Mass Market Original/Fiction
\$6.99 (\$8.99 Canada)
On Sale December 28, 2010
978-1-4201-1019-7

MERCILESS
Mary Burton
Zebra Books/Mass Market Original/Fiction
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www.maryburton.com

**CONTACT: Joan Schulhafer, Joan Schulhafer Publishing & Media Consulting,
973-338-7428, joan@joanschulhafer.com
Karen Auerbach, Kensington Books, 212-407-1571,
kauerbach@kensingtonbooks.com**