Stolen Prey by John Sandford

Finished Too Quickly....

Lucas Davenport has seen many terrible murder scenes. This is one of the worst. In the small Minnesota town of Deephaven, an entire family has been killed - husband, wife, two daughters, dogs.

There's something about the scene that pokes at Lucas's cop instincts - it looks an awful lot like the kind of scorched-earth retribution he's seen in drug killings sometimes. But this is a seriously upscale town, and the husband was an executive vice president at a big bank. It just doesn't seem to fit.

Until it does. And where it leads Lucas will take him into the darkest nightmare of his life.

My Personal Review:
John Sandford is back with the latest installment (22) - Stolen Prey - in his wildly successful and hugely popular series featuring Lucas Davenport, an agent for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

Lucas's job at the BCA was mostly self-invented, and included politically sensitive cases, or cases that might attract a lot of media attention. When a pair of tweekers rob him at an ATM, breaking his wrist and damaging his ego, he embarks on a long term mission to find them. This is put on the back burner when the superintendent of the BCA calls - a case that is definitely going to be in the spotlight needs Davenport's skills. An entire family has been found murdered - slaughtered really, tortured in unimaginable ways. Lucas's investigation leads places no one saw coming - this isn't just a spree killer. It looks like a Mexican gang hit. What could this software engineer have done to bring this wrath on his family? Soon enough the DEA and a pair of Mexican Federales are also on the case. But everyone seems to have their own priorities concerning the case....

I've always enjoyed Lucas and his irreverent flaunting of the rules. He's getting older and little mellower, but still has no problem side stepping
I love the barbed banter between himself and team members Del Capslock, Jensen and Shackle, but no Davenport book is complete without Virgil Flowers. Those tweakers robbing ATMs? Flowers has been put to work on the case - which seems to be leading to stolen.....horse manure?

Somewhere along the line, it occurred to him that he hadnt spoken to Virgil Flowers. Hed probably taken the day off, and knowing Flowers, hed done it in a boat. The thing about Flowers was, in Lucass humble opinion, you could send him out for a loaf of bread and hed find an illegal bread cartel smuggling in heroin-saturated wheat from Afghanistan. Either that, or hed be fishing in a muskie tournament, on government time. You had to keep an eye on him.

I have expressed doubts about Davenports adopted daughter Letty in past books, but my opinion has changed. Shes definitely growing on me and I think well see more of her in future books.

As always, Sandford has concocted a whip smart, action filled plot with lots of threads to keep your finger on. He employs a great twist that caught me unawares part way through.

I have enjoyed this series from book one and nothing has changed - I still eagerly await every new entry from one of my favourite authors - and curse myself when I finish it in a day!

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