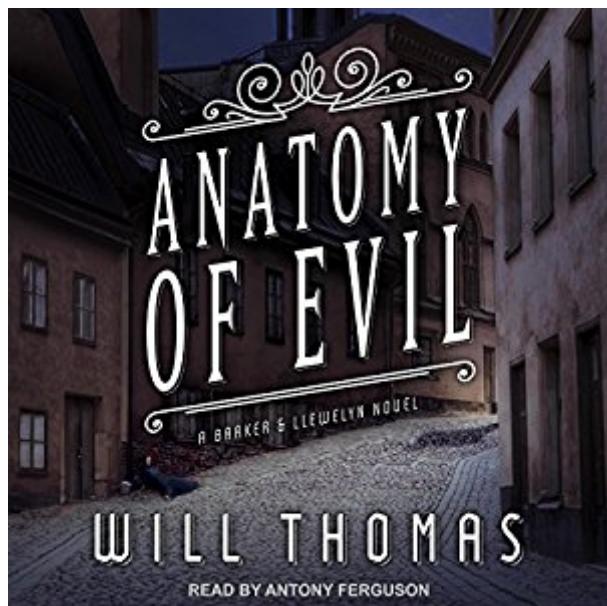


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# Anatomy Of Evil: Barker & Llewelyn Series, Book 7



## Synopsis

Cyrus Barker is undoubtedly England's premiere private enquiry agent. With the help of his assistant, Thomas Llewelyn, he's developed an enviable reputation for discreetly solving some of the toughest, most consequential cases in recent history. But one evening in 1888, Robert Anderson, the head of Scotland Yard's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), appears at Barker's office with an offer. A series of murders in the Whitechapel area of London are turning the city upside down, with tremendous pressure being brought to bear on Scotland Yard and the government itself. Barker is to be named temporary envoy to the Royal Family with regard to the case while surreptitiously bringing his investigative skill to the case. With various elements of society, high and low, bringing their own agendas to increasingly shocking murders, Barker and Llewelyn must find and hunt down the century's most notorious killer. Though the Whitechapel Killer has managed to elude the finest minds of Scotland Yard - and beyond - he's never faced a mind as nimble and a man as skilled as Cyrus Barker. But even Barker's prodigious skills may not be enough to track down a killer in time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The seventh Barker and Llewelyn novel has the pair temporarily working with Scotland Yard on the Ripper murders of the summer and fall of 1888. For readers familiar with the murders, Thomas' treatment of the crimes is faithfully retold and historically accurate. (In the previous novels, Thomas is similarly accurate in his historical details, one of the reasons I am such a fan.) While the

investigation of the Whitechapel murders is the focus of the plot, the details of life inside Scotland Yard - office politics, the hierarchy of rank and rank and the minute of investigation - made the story believable, as were the portrayals of Detectives Abberline, Andrews and Swanson and the Vigilance Committee organizer, Lusk. As Barker, Llewelyn and the Yard dig deeper in their investigation, the usual suspects (Leather Apron, Montague Druitt, Michale Ostrog, Aaron Kosminski, John Pizer, James Sadler, Francis Tumblety) are questioned, alibis looked into, and theories are advanced - as the body count rises and residents of Whitechapel demand answers. Thomas' resolution of the murders is plausible (and fits the conclusions of several contemporary investigators); the method in which the crime is solved is a little far-fetched, but given the strength of his writing, it is easily overlooked. Writing historical fiction is a whole other animal from detective fiction, and as such is not without its pitfalls. Thomas walks the line between the two brilliantly, writing another riveting mystery. *Anatomy of Evil* is another great addition to the series. For fans of the series, I also recommend Alex Grecian's *The Yard* (whose stories pick up in Scotland Yard just after the Whitechapel murders.)

I have loved Will Thomas' "Barker and Llewelyn" novels since the first one, but I think this one is the best. Thomas did an incredible job of research into all the various theories of the identity of Jack the Ripper as well as the reason it seems that no one was apprehended. He came up with a logical and interesting conclusion based on this research. Though there is no graphic description of violence there is some mention of the condition of the victims' corpses when found, but it doesn't linger on it. Really brilliant writing and the characters are so likable, appealing and intelligent. I especially liked how they deduced that the whole "Jack the Ripper" persona was more or less made up by the press at the time to stir up the public and sell newspapers and that is why it has lingered over times, not unlike the sensationalizing of "news" today. He does an excellent job in describing the competition between various factions of the police, their failure to work together or disclose facts to each other and the subsequent delay in stopping the murders until after 5 victims had been brutally murdered. I had trouble putting this down from beginning to end and will probably read it again another time.

Will Thomas has become my favourite author of a crime series since James Lee Burke's Dave Robicheaux series. For anyone who loves period stories of mystery, intrigue and crime, these two (Cyrus Barker and Thomas Llewelyn) will have you hooked! Fascinating stories with real historical characters woven in, and details of sights, sounds and smells all pull the reader into the scenes most vividly. As with Burke's novels, the minute I finished one, I immediately wanted to (and did!)

pick up the next to read!

Both myself and my husband have thoroughly enjoyed all the Barker and Llewelyn novels to date, so we were delighted to read the latest adventures of our intrepid pair. Like Holmes and Watson, Cyrus Barker and his able assistant, Thomas Llewelyn move easily from their agency and Scotland Yard to the decidedly mean streets of Whitechapel in a desperate and dangerous attempt to find and stop the murderous devil known as Jack the Ripper. Contacted by Scotland Yard, the pair join the Yard in the capacity of special investigators to assist the police in their hunt for the killer. Although the police refuse to admit they're stymied in their search, it soon becomes clear that they need the services of Barker and Llewelyn to crack the case. This is the usual high octane mystery that we have come to expect from Will Thomas's novels that leads you on the chase, side by side with Thomas as he faithfully follows his employer, even when 'the Guv's' actions don't appear to make a lot of sense. And as with all of these novels, the author tosses in a little something extra at the end. But you'll enjoy the trip getting there.

For a Ripper story, I really enjoyed this one. Part of the problem for a writer when working with the Ripper case, is that they have to keep to the Ripper's timeline. So there are long periods between the killings where the detectives on the case were left to do the hard grunt work of investigations and questionings in order to try to catch Jack. What to do with your characters while waiting for the next murder? I thought the author did a good job of getting me invested in the mystery of the who and why of the Ripper killings with more of Barker and Llewelyn working together and their new relationship with Scotland Yard. He was able to weave the horror of the case with the drudgery of investigating it, the politics behind the scenes of a Scotland Yard being rebuilt, the contrast of the old way of investigations with the new-fangled scientific methods, the sensitive nature of what could be a royal suspect, and the fearful and dangerous mood on the street into a story of what it may have actually been like at the time the Ripper killed. One of the better Ripper stories I've read.

There has been many stories written about the "Ripper" case that they all seem to fall in the same place. In reality the case was " Officially " not resolved many Theories sprung up about who was the killer all the stories are based on conjecture

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