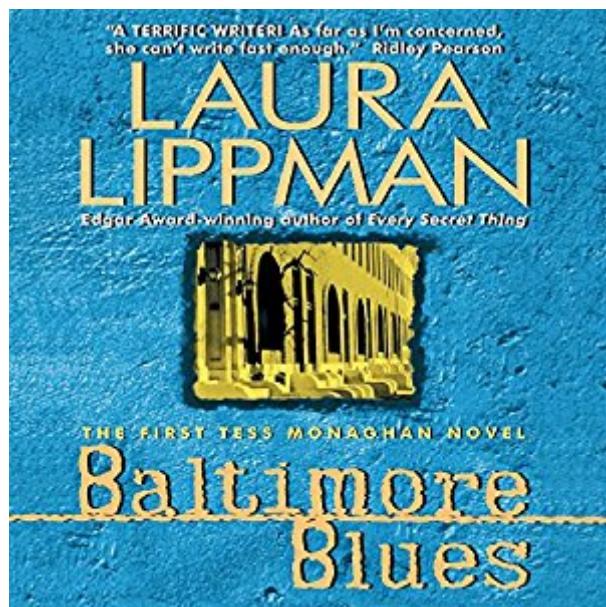


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# Baltimore Blues: Tess Monaghan, Book 1



## **Synopsis**

In a city where someone is murdered almost every day, attorney Michael Abramowitz's death should be just another statistic. But the slain lawyer's notoriety and his taste for illicit midday trysts make the case front-page news in every local paper except the "Star," which crashed and burned before Abramowitz did. A former Star reporter who knows every inch of this town from historic Fort McHenry to the crumbling projects of Cherry Hill now unemployed journalist Tess Monaghan also knows the guy the cops like for the killing: cuckolded fiance Darryl Rock Paxton. The time is ripe for a career move anything to pay the rent so when rowing buddy Rock wants to hire her to do some unorthodox snooping to help clear his name, Tess agrees. But there are lethal secrets hiding in the Charm City shadows, and Tess's own name could end up on that ever-expanding list of Baltimore dead." --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

## **Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition

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## **Customer Reviews**

I have to admit that I don't read very many American mystery/crime writers, and those I do tend to be overwhelmingly male (my two favorites are probably George Pelecanos and Elmore Leonard, just to give you a sense of my taste). And when I have sampled female-written series (Patricia Cornwell and Janet Evanovich are the two that spring to mind), they have utterly failed to connect with me. Nonetheless, Lippman's Tess Monaghan series came highly recommended to me, and the nearby Baltimore setting was a big draw. This first in the series finds heroine Tess teetering on the brink of 30, and somewhat adrift following the closing down of the newspaper she worked at. She

lives in a cheap apartment above her aunt's bookstore, and barely makes ends meet working as a clerk in the store and doing an odd job for an uncle. Her personal life is equally in flux, as she doesn't exactly have a slew of friends, and her love life is vacant, save for the random booty-call by her ex-boyfriend who cheats on his current girlfriend with Tess. The one constant in her life is a daily crack-of-dawn appointment with her racing shell and the Patapsco river. This daily exercise has led to a friendship with another avid rower, Darryl Paxton. One day he hires her to check up on the activities of his type-A fiancee, and thus Tess embarks on her first session of amateur sleuthing. However, what starts as a fairly simple tailing job turns into a high profile murder case, as the fiancee's high-profile boss at a prestigious law firm has his head bashed in. Darryl is charged with the murder, and Tess is put to work by his defense lawyer as a gopher/investigator.

This novel introduces Ms Lippman's Regular series heroine ,ex journalist Tess Monaghan, who since her former newspaper closed down has found herself scratching a precarious existence working for her Aunt Kitty,a bookstore owner, and doing some supernumerary work on behalf of her Uncle Donald, work that unknown to her is not really required and is paid for by her uncle from his own pocket. She is close friends with The Rock, with whom she shares a passion for rowing, he being nationally ranked and she an enthusiastic amateur. They train together and enjoy a relaxed camaraderie. He is engaged to a young lawyer, Ava, and is afraid that she is seeing another man. He asks Tess to follow her and report on her movements. She accepts reluctantly, being unable to refuse the money on offer. She finds that the poised and unlikeable Ava is a shoplifter and is seeing Michael Abramowitz, once a prominent public defender now a partner in the firm which employs her. Abramowitz is murdered and suspicion falls upon The Rock. His lawyer ,another rowing fanatic, named Tyner, engages Tess to dig around in the case trying to uncover facts useful to his defence. She finds that Ava has spun a yarn to the Rock about being forced to sleep with Abramowitz and thus the Rock has motive enough. Aided by her socialite friend Whitney she delves into the case uncovering information about the personalities involved. She finds herself mired in the worlds of teenage sexual abuse and murder, and industrial compensation cases both involving Abramowitz . Others have valid motives for wishing him dead. The case is unravelled smoothly and in addition to Tess there are likeable characters in plenty--Crow , a bookstore clerk and wannabe musician, smitten by Tess, and Whitney, flamboyant and opinionated but with personality to spare.

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