

Residue

Jim Knipfel

Knipfel's latest (*Quitting the Nairobi Trio*) is a heckuva thing, a comic mystery of the macabre, oh, yah, as a small Wisconsin town's darkest secrets are revealed. When a brilliant but mercurial mortician and his assistant are gunned down in their office—Beaver Rapids' first murders in 20 years—it's up to Sheriff Leonard Koznowski to get to the bottom of it, and right before Thanksgiving, don'cha know it. But the more Koznowski looks, the stranger this case gets: turns out Klaus the undertaker had some unusual plans for his embalmed clients, something to do with maybe regenerating them? The primary suspect, a crazed religious lady whose church harassed Klaus for years, ain't making things much easier. And what's this about a black market for body parts? In Kausheenah County, of all places? Oh, yah, this one gets weirder and weirder by the day. Only one thing is for certain: Sheriff Koznowski is definitely too old for this. **VERDICT** This quirky, charming novel evokes the provincial spirit and dark humor of *Fargo* and will be a welcome change of pace for any mystery lover. —Michael Pucci, South Orange P.L., NJ