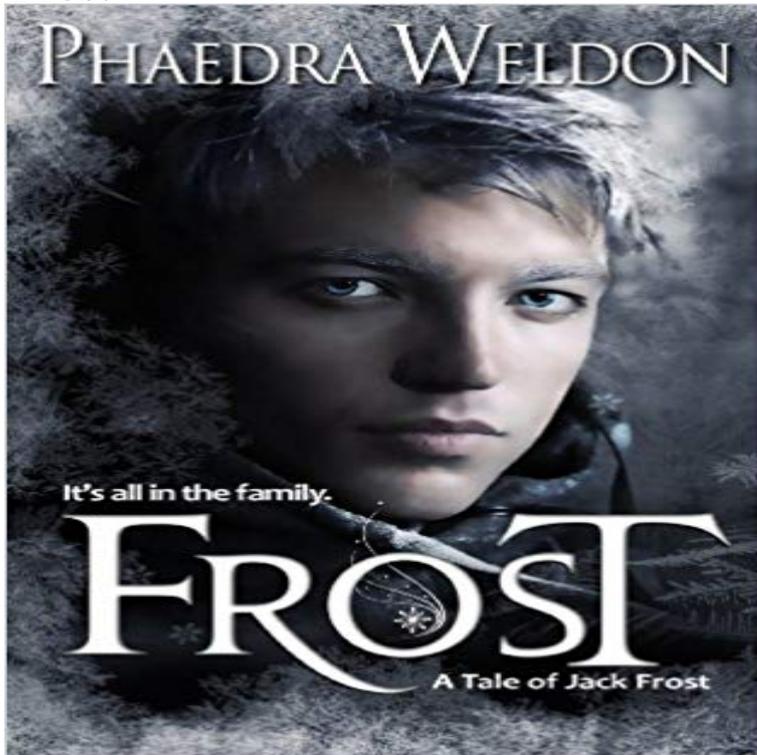


Frost



This is not a childrens story. Detective Jack Frost has everything he ever wanted; a good job, a fiancé who loves him, and his first child on the way. His future looks bright and promising. When an unprecedented heat wave turns December into the hottest month on record, a victim with Jacks face propels him into the reality of myth and legend as the body count rises.

Printed with Permission 2012 Excerpt ~
He wore my face. How often had I shown that face indifference as I shaved it? Washed it. And on occasion cursed it. Id seen it green when sick, red when sunburned, and painted for Halloween. But Id never seen it dead. Jack, you okay?

Detective Gawain Crow, my partner on the Fulton County Police Force as well as my best friend, put a hand on my shoulder. He presented a pretty daunting figure with his tanned skin, long dark ponytail and black Stetson cowboy hat. Two thirds Cherokee and one third smart ass, he often overshadowed my more diminutive size. I clocked in at about five foot nine barefoot and never bothered to aid what he called my height-challenged handicap with heeled boots. I was comfy in sneakers the more worn the better. I knelt beside the body. He was tucked between the front end of one car and the bumper of another. A couple of the uniformed officers had been dispatched to go house to house to find the owner of the cars so they could be moved, and to discover if anyone heard or saw anything. The whole scene was pretty melancholy in the early morning darkness as Christmas lights winked on and off in the yards and on the houses in the surrounding neighborhood. Yeah Happy Holidays and good will toward men. The only thing visible from the road were his legs. Apparently his killer took his shoes. It was early morning of December 21st, 11:21 am. Sweat rolled down my forehead and into my eyes, which I rubbed with the bottom of my tee-shirt. The temperature

hovered around 83? with little creditable explanation. Of course there were the reports of Global Warming, Glacial Melt and the inevitable Doomsday shows . Either way, it was damn fucking hot. And in December. I dont care how far south you go in the states, the temperature should be in the low to mid 40s. None of this was right. With the aggravating heat came the predictable aggravating increase in crime. Not just robbery, breaking and entering, or car jackingbut flashing. Too many streakers up and down Peachtree street, thinking just because it was hot, everyone needed to see their instrument of torture. Yet these perverted megalomaniacal pinheads werent far from the truth of how the weather had changed the local fashion. Everyone at the crime scene was dressed for comfort. The officers usually in uniform had adopted a new look: black precinct logo tee-shirts and shorts. Even Id forgone my usual shirt, blazer and jeans for black cargo shorts and a Rudolph tee-shirt.

It was a present from my fiance. I did not buy it. Better not get squeamish at thisor youre not going to make it through that babys birth. It gets messy. Doctor Elizabeth Noel, Chief Medical Examiner, pushed a thermometer into a jagged wound on the bodys right side. Core tempwoyour doubles a cold one, Jack. She frowned. This isnt possible. What is it? Crow knelt beside me. I think he felt he needed to stick close to me. I mean, we were looking at one hell of a convincing body double.

Noel tapped the thermometers plastic display. The core temp is lower than the surface temp. Inside hes reading twenty-two degrees. But his surface temp, she pointed to the temp-strip shed placed over his skin, says hes 95?. If I go by core Id say hes been dead for a long time. But the surface says hes only been dead a few hours.

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