



Scones & Bones

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Indigo Tea Shop owner Theodosia Browning is lured into attending the Heritage Society's "Pirates and Plunder" soiree. But it's an antique diamond skull ring that gets plundered by someone who murders a history intern in the process. Theodosia knows she'll have to whet her investigative skills to find the killer among a raft of suspects.

Scones & Bones Details

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From Reader Review Scones & Bones for online ebook

Crystal says

I am starting to realize that I really enjoy Cozy Mysteries. They are a lot of fun with out all the sometimes gruesome details of other mystery and suspense novels and it's also fun to watch an amateur solve the case. And Ms. Childs makes some very interesting characters in her books that I found endearing and I enjoyed watching through the book.

This is the first book I have read in The Tea Shop Mystery series, and it's the 12th book in the series. But don't let that stop you if you haven't read any in the series. I know I would know and understand the characters more if I had read the earlier books, but I never felt lost and I got to know the characters well and found that this book is a good stand-alone cozy mystery. Will I go back and read the series now? Sure I will and I will continue to read from this point. The characters and the setting have really drawn me in and I look forward to having another series to read.

Let's talk a little about characters. Theodosia, Drayton and Hayley seem to be the main characters. They are the owners and workers at their tea shop in Charleston, South Carolina. I loved getting to know them a little in this book and found I really liked all three of them and liked how they work together even though they are all three very different people. Theodosia (Theo) takes the lead role in the book and she and Drayton work together to solve the mystery with help from some other friends, while running the tea shop and participating in the Food and Wine week that is going on in the city. To go along with the mystery there may also be some romance brewing.

I also found the setting to be fascinating. Charleston is a town I would like to visit and since I live just a few hours north on the North Carolina coast I loved the setting. I also loved the pirate lore in this book. Using Blackbeard is a great plot device. Everyone knows about Blackbeard and I loved seeing our own beloved Beaufort Inlet mentioned in the book (I live and work just a few miles from there and that is where the Queen Anne's Revenge, Blackbeard's ship has been found). Ms. Childs does a wonderful job with pirate lore and incorporating it into the story and into the Charleston area.

The mystery was fun. I liked following Theo and Drayton around as they met other people and began to put the pieces together. Though I did somewhat suspect who did it, it still came as a surprise once they figured it out. It makes a great cozy mystery and I enjoyed reading every minute of it.

My only problem with the whole book was I felt the ending was a little rushed. I understand that this happens sometimes. Even though I was a bit disappointed with this, it did not take away from my overall love for the book. And I will definitely be picking up the next one in this series to see where a storyline from this book goes and to see what kind of mystery Theo and Drayton get to solve next.

Debbie Maskus says

Laura Childs writes 3 different series, this series is set in Charleston, SC, and features an owner of a Tea Shop. The Tea Shop Mystery series centers on historic Charleston and all the finer aspects of that old town with quaint shops, fine dining, gala parties, and charming gentry. Childs seems to write formula novels with each following the same pattern, which by number twelve has lost a little of the charm of this series. This story centered on pirates, especially Blackbeard and his supposed treasure. I enjoy the historic jaunt, but the

formula mystery is trite and boring.

Kathy says

Southern hospitality, tea, and gourmet food mixed with pirates, robbery, and murder. What could make for a better mystery! It was truly a joy to follow along as Theodosia and Drayton served up cup after cup of oolong, chai, and intrigue, while surrounded by a supporting cast that includes the token grumpy cop, a pirate obsessed antiques dealer, and a skull-wearing proprietress of an art gallery, not to mention a couple of neurotic sisters and a smarmy attorney. Who killed the intern and stole Blackbeard's skull cup? Can Theo find out before the killer strikes again, or will she find herself or someone she loves the next victim of Blackbeard's curse?

Dana says

I keep coming back to this series because I like the setting so much, but I think I may be hitting my limit. The writing is starting to seem formulaic enough to break into my enjoyment of the books.

Mirjam says

Every time I read a Tea Shop Mystery I end up wishing the Indigo Tea Shop really exists. I would love to drink a good tea brewed by Drayton, eat something delicious prepared by Haley and to be welcomed by the charming Theodosia! Laura Childs has created characters who feel like friends and make you want to pop over for a chat. Childs's beautifully drawn characters are realistic, lovable and charming. This is the 12th book in the series, so by now I have gotten to know most of the characters quite well. I adore Theodosia and Drayton. I like Haley, although she is not quite my cup of tea and she has a lousy taste in men! Tattletale Delaine always makes me chuckle, while her sister Nadine makes me roll my eyes. What a silly person! The grumpy bull-dog Detective Tidwell continues to amuse me and so does the influential Southern gentleman Timothy Neville.

The good thing about the series is that you do not need to be a tea drinker to love it, although the tea-aspect makes me love it even more! I enjoy reading about the new tea blends, tea inspired gifts and the bits of intriguing tea lore. I think it's terrific that Theodosia named her Dalbrador Earl Grey, after a classic tea blend. All these little things together bring such charm to the series. Add the vivid local colour and you have got a winner!

In Scones & Bones Childs adds a fascinating topic to her mystery, pirates. Like most people I find pirates intriguing, so a Pirates and Plunder show would have me dash to the Heritage Society! Pirates, secret societies and murder add a bit of mystery to the case, which I enjoyed from start to finish. The last sentence had me smile and gave me something else to look forward to in the next book! Can't wait...

Wendy B says

I like the series a lot and I'm so glad that someone other than Theodosia was in danger at the end of the book. It was beginning to feel like she was always being kidnapped, stuck in a hole, tunnel, some place dank and dark and falling apart. She still looked a wreck at the end but I liked the growing list of suspects and enough motive for each. This one had me guessing who was the creep until the end.

Susan says

I like Charleston and I like tea, so I've been a fan of the Tea Shop mystery series. That may end, however, since there was precious little of either in this book. The ending of this book seemed too abrupt and I couldn't imagine a police office ignoring proper procedures as Detective Tidwell did at the end. I don't think there was any way to guess who the killer was since Drayton and Theodosia ran all over the countryside attempting to solve the mystery and there didn't seem to be a real focus to their investigation. In addition to these faults, the book was riddled with similies. The worst (in my opinion) was "and then the answer bubbled up inside Tehodosia's brain like saber tooth tiger bones being spit from the depths of the La Brea tar pits." Huh??? Who uses imagery like that? It distracted me from the weak plot, though.

Marian says

I must admit that one of the bigger lures for me in reading the Tea Shop mystery series is the ability to poke holes in the description of certain aspects of Charleston (I still cannot imagine anyone thinking it was a particularly good idea to go running at 10PM along the Battery, even with a dog along to act as back-up), but I also enjoy the *idea* of the Indigo Tea Shop even if I don't care for tea. I love the interaction between Haley, Drayton, and even Theodosia, as well as the occasional visit from Miss Dimple.

Everything else tends to be a mixed bag. Sometimes you get an actual mystery you can solve, sometimes you get half of one, sometimes Theodosia is incredibly annoying in her perfect beauty or the way she tends to read as far older than she's supposed to be, and sometimes things work. There is one constant: I loathe Delaine Dish. I'm not all that fond of her sister, Nadine, either, and I'm hoping that sometime before the series ends (whenever this may be), Delaine is run out of the city one way or another.

Scones and Bones was a really enjoyable read until the final few chapters. I got the thrill of correctly identifying whodunnit, and while the why was never really in question, it would have been nice to get a confession from the guilty party. Theo seemed less perfectly put together this go round and she also seemed younger. Possibly this is due to the fact that she changed boyfriends again, and a new relationship (or simply the promise of one) is enough to bring new life into a character. While I never really bought Parker/Theo as an epic sort of love, I really hope that he gets a proper sendoff, because as it is, Theo's cheating on him and should be called out by someone other than just Delaine. (Though I can't say I'm not looking forward to the fireworks that could follow since Max left Delaine to be with Theo.)

As quickly as I read the book, I do have to say that the end was just a little... weird. Haley gets kidnapped, Theo uses Tidwell as her personal taxi, but he waits until he actually is on Johns Island to call for backup, despite the fact that the ride from the Historic District is long enough to have called it in and had people waiting for when they did have an exact address, and then when Haley is returned home safe and sound, the stolen items are also returned with her, even though one was used in the rescue effort. Wouldn't the police

want that kept around for evidence?

Or when Nadine is kidnapped, even though she has been busted lying to the police previously, but escapes, still dripping in all kinds of ick, Tidwell refuses to take a statement or take her seriously, despite the fact that it actually makes sense that the killer would kidnap her after reading the paper's report that she was the only eyewitness to the attacks.

Oh, and no one who claims to be as knowledgeable as Theodosia is about the old cemeteries in Charleston would do a grave rubbing (that is never used for anything that I recall) without at least mentioning that many cemeteries in the city have banned this practice, especially on the centuries old headstones.

Suzanne says

I've always enjoyed this series but I'm just not 'feeling the love' with this latest offering. It was a little thin on everything - plot, good mystery, scrumptious recipes, and really good events. There were those things, of course, but they didn't seem as deep or well thought out as in previous books. I used to feel like I was in the tea room savoring the delicacies and tea.

Delaine Dish seemed even more annoying than usual. I have trouble believing that someone as sophisticated and assertive as Theodosia would continue to put up with her. (view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

I'll give the next book *Agony of the Leaves* a chance before ditching this series. Everyone can have an off day or an off book. If, however, *Agony* is no better than *Bones*, the tea shop series will be history for me.

Jessica says

The first thing Childs wants everyone to know about Theodosia is that she is with a group of friends. This is promising. The next most important thing, though, is that she is gorgeous. "Her abundance of auburn hair could have inspired Raphael; her fair English skin seemed tempered by the cool, rainy weather of the Salisbury Plain. Theodosia's blue eyes sparkled with barely contained energy" She also has high cheekbones, and a full mouth. Is anyone else thinking of young Anne Shirley's "raven tressed" heroines? Only me?

I read for a while longer. The prose in *Scones & Bones* was, as you may have gathered from that description, colorful. It tended to intrude itself at odd moments, and I never was sure what to think of characters who talk about tea in tea-catalog terms. Also, I'm pretty sure EMTs don't put their stethoscopes on a man's chest, decide he's dead, and leave. I skipped a few pages, and a few more, and then a few more. And then I ran across this:

"the answer bubbled up inside Theodosia's brain like saber tooth tiger bones being spit from the depths of the La Brea tar pits."

What does one do with a metaphor like that? Hang caution tape around it? Circle admiringly? Stutter to a disbelieving halt before reading it out loud to any and all passers by?

Note: Originally written as part of a multi-book review over at my blog, Bookwyrme's Lair

Mason Canyon says

Reading a new Tea Shop Mystery is like visiting with old friends. Even though this is the 12th installment in the series, it is a stand alone book. New readers will be able to keep pace with the unique cast of characters without feeling lost.

Theodosia Browning, owner of the Indigo Tea Shop, is talked into attending the Heritage Society's 'Pirates and Plunder' party by Drayton Conneley, master tea blender for the shop and Heritage Society booster. One of the main attractions of the gala is an antique skull drinking cup set with a huge diamond. It's alleged to be the actual skull of Blackbeard.

The party takes a horrible turn when the skull is stolen, the society's office manager is injured, and a history intern is killed.

Theodosia can't help but get involved to find the skull and bring the killer to justice. Along the way she is also busy hosting a housewarming party to show off her new carriage house, participating in the Charleston Food and Wine Festival by sponsoring a tea and cheese tasting, having tingling feelings for the handsome new PR Director of the Gibbes Museum of Art, and of course, running her tea shop.

Author Laura Childs blends pirates, secret societies, buried treasures, mystery, murder, and mayhem with a touch of humor. Just when you think you have figured out who the killer is, a new twist introduces another possible suspect and another clue as to why the skull was taken.

This is a fast pace, enjoyable read from beginning to end. You don't have to be a tea drinker to enjoy this delightful cozy mystery. But if you do enjoy tea, Drayton may just tempt you with a new flavor or two. Though I'm a huge coffee drinker, Theodosia and the gang at the Indigo Tea Shop have lead me to try some wonderful new tea blends and even collect a tea pot or two.

As an added bonus to SCONES & BONES, readers will find delicious recipes (such as Lemon Chess Pie), tea time tips and tea resources in the back of the book. There is also a preview of Laura Childs' next Scapbooking Mystery, SKELTON LETTERS, coming in October from Berkley Prime Crime

Luna Raven says

I don't know why I keep reading this series, other than the fact that I greatly enjoy reading about a teashop and all the little extras. There has been no character development, the love interest changes at the drop of a hat with no warning, rhyme or reason and I always figure out who the murderer is way before the main character does. If you see me reading the next one, take it away!

Sallie says

So, Theodosia really began to bug me in this book, #12 in the series. The mystery was ok, but not resolved completely at the end of the book. Another rescue of someone the killer has abducted, not Theo this time but

still, this has been done too often in this series. I think it's time I moved to a different series.

Ellen says

I finished this in about four hours, it was truly horrible. Sad really, because when I found this series it seemed sweet. I finished the book in the hopes that things would improve, they did not. The author has crossed the line from being proud of Charleston to outright snobbery. The characters were over the top and obnoxious. Theodosia's sense of entitlement is quite ridiculous; demanding to be kept in the police investigation loop and removing evidence from the scene of the crime before the police even got there.

Cece says

This series seems to be running out of steam. This was a lot of same old same old.
