



Bone Shadows

Christopher Valen

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Bone Shadows Details

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From Reader Review Bone Shadows for online ebook

Jane says

This is the fourth John Santana novel and I have found that I can't predict just where that character is going to be nor how he is going to save himself in some pretty terrifying situations. This novel has the subject of PTSD running evenly through the plotline and it provided some very interesting reading; much information given about that very scary condition. I also liked Santana's new love interest and I will be eagerly awaiting book #5 to find out more! I like this author A LOT!

Annie says

A most excellent 5 star read!

Bone Shadows....calcium phosphate, which makes up about 70% of the mass of bones & teeth, It is soft & easily crushed into a powder & given to the family....want to know more? read the book

H Keith Lyons says

I received this book as part of Goodreads' FirstReads Giveaways and I'm very glad that I did. I don't usually reach for a police procedural like this when looking for a read, but I was immediately drawn into the story from the first page and found myself eagerly looking forward to the next chapter and how the story would progress.

Christopher Valen's protagonist, John Santana is a no nonsense, by the book police detective that will not rest until he has found the truth, no matter the consequence. I found myself completely understanding the character, what makes him tick, what his past sins were, without needing the benefit of having read the previous books in the series.

As for the mysteries, we follow the case from John's point of view, discovering new clues as he discovers them. Every clue, every red herring, every twist and turn, so we see the case build in true police procedural fashion.

Speaking of which, Valen's never once dumbs down the dialogue as Santana interacts with his characters. Explanations are incorporated into dialogue and narrative so that the reader understands the procedures, the science and the world of the homicide detective.

I find myself very eager to explore the previous stories in the John Santana series as well as hoping for new ones soon.

Sheila Myers says

Great read. Christopher Valen has created some unique characters and a fast-paced, thrilling plot.

Charline Ratcliff says

Having just finished reading “Bone Shadows” by author Christopher Valen, I am pleased to say that I thoroughly enjoyed the book. “Bone Shadows” has a well thought out plot that is up to date with today’s society and current social issues. Valen writes with an easy to follow style and he is adept at keeping his tale interesting, intriguing and exciting. I appreciated the many convoluted twists and turns of the story and Valen did an excellent job of keeping everything woven seamlessly together. I am also certain that this book will elicit at least one or two gasps of shock/surprise from its future readers...

Getting to the premise of “Bone Shadows...” Over the past few years there have been quite a few young men that have been found dead in the Mississippi River. While this is an alarming trend, the autopsies rule out foul play and instead point to death by excessive drinking and then drowning. While any kind of death is tragic, these findings certainly seem conclusive based on the supporting evidence, and therefore no red flags have been raised. That is until the drowning death of Scott Rafferty, an Iraq war vet who suffers from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.)

St. Paul Homicide Detective John Santana (the book’s main character) must now decide whether Rafferty’s death was accidental or an actual murder. All the facts seem to point to an accidental death yet Santana has a gut feeling that this is a case of premeditated murder. The more Santana digs; the more resistance he meets. The more he digs; the less he feels that this was an accident. However, if this really is a case of murder then Santana has to figure out the age old question: “who done it?”

I don’t want to give any more of the plot but suffice it to say that “Bone Shadows” was a great read. It kept me hooked from page one and I was bummed when I finished it. An engrossing read from start to finish and I was appreciative that any gruesome scenes were tastefully written and not over the top. Looking forward to reading future works by this author.

(Reviewed in association with Rebecca's Reads).

Vicky Boackle says

great who-done-it book.

Patricia says

John Santana is a homicide detective in St. Paul, Minnesota and is very good at his job. However, there is a lot more to Santana than just his job. Born in Columbia, Santana lives under a cloud knowing that at any time his deeds in Columbia prior to fleeing the country can come back to haunt him and seek revenge.

When the body of Scott Rafferty, age 23, is recovered from the Mississippi river, the initial reaction is death by suicide. Santana is not immediately buying into the fact that Rafferty's death is a suicide. Santana's past experience with suicide by drowning has been that of an orderly scene with the victims clothes removed and neatly folded. This is not the case with Rafferty's body.

Rafferty's father, Hank Rafferty, is a police officer and his wife, Rachel Hardin, is a Ramsey County Judge. Hank informs Santana that a drowning simply does not make sense. Hank states that Scott saw his mother drown and Scott has never liked water. Rachel Hardin, Scott's stepmother, explained that Scott was seeing a psychiatrist. Hank explained that the doctor was treating Scott for PTSDA (post traumatic stress disorder). Hanks said that Kimberly Dalton, Scott's girlfriend, had contacted him a few nights ago concerned that she had not heard from Scott. Hank suggested that she file a missing persons report.

As Santana is attempting to determine how to proceed with the investigation, he is approached by Jack Brody. Brody is a freelance journalist. Brody was once an award-winning reporter but he hasn't had a good story for awhile. He offers Santana a theory that there is a serial killer operating along the I-94 corridor. Jordan Parrish, a private investigator, hired by the parents of another victim tells Santana that she is in agreement with Brody.

The case becomes even more confusing when Santana is approached by Ed Kincaid of the FBI. Kincaid tells Santana it would be best if he closed the Rafferty case as a suicide by drowning. In order to back up his suggestion he begins questioning Santana regarding Santana's last trip to Columbia. Santana is having none of Kincaid's veiled threats and makes no bones about telling Kincaid.

As Santana digs deeper into not only the death of Rafferty but also other deaths by drowning, he discovers the story gets more exciting and complicated. "Bone Shadows" is an exceptionally good read and a great addition to the John Santana series. The series can be read out of order without a problem but to really get to know Santana it is best to start at the beginning.

Millie Burns says

This is a book I won as a First Reads give away. I must say I enjoyed the writing style of Christopher Valen, everything was clear and succinct, flowing smoothly from scene to scene. There were plenty of suspects to keep me guessing. The scenes involving violence were just perfect, not over the top with gratuitous blood and gore. This is the first book that I've read by this author and I would not hesitate to read more of his work. I'd give it another 1/2 star if they'd let me!

JC says

Another excellent book in this series. I like the straight forward way in which Santana goes about his job - gets right to the facts and starts working. Enjoyable while also seeming quite realistic.

Bonny Millard says

Pressure Switch

The explanation of PTSD and MTBI was very interesting along with the psychiatric rehabilitation theories. The murder mystery twists and turns compels the reader onward.

Donna says

3.5 stars. St Paul homicide detective John Santana investigates the drowning death of Scott Rafferty, a young man who served two tours in Afghanistan and also the son of a fellow police officer. Scott suffered from PTSD. A reporter believes young men are being targeted by a serial killer and he tries to convince Santana to investigate from this angle. Santana teams up with private investigator Jordan Parrish to solve these deaths. The book deals with serious topics of PTSD and traumatic brain injuries interwoven throughout the story.

Sheryl says

"Bone Shadows" is an excellent read. I started on the fourth installment of this police procedural. I'll be going backwards for sure.

This is about a loner Detective John Santana, who is fighting demons from a tragic childhood in Colombia. He is working in St. Paul MN, on a case regarding soldiers coming home suffering from PTSD. Someone is killing them but who? It's an action packed read with an insight to PTSD and what it does to our soldiers as well as civilians.

Mr. Valen's book was very well plotted and Detective John Santana is certainly someone I want to get know better.

Ann says

Veterans are supposedly committing suicide by drowning themselves after drinking. Then one of the police officers son dies . Then the investigation really takes off for Santana another officer. Are drugs involved , were they really drunk what was going on. It started to be about 6 Vets and really confusing what really is happening to these men. When your in a war and have to kill someone sometimes you end up with PTSD Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome . It appears a lot of these Vets that died had this.

The RLPL Rice Lake Public Library says

Patron Review:

This is the second book I have read by C. Valen. I look forward to more of his books. It held my interest all the way through the story. The character was very realistic. Would enjoy meeting him.

Mike says

I bought this on a whim - the author was doing a meet & greet at the local Barnes & Noble near my house and I felt compelled to support a local author (the guy lives in the Twin Cities and that's the setting for all of his novels). Here's the thing - generally speaking, a mystery novel is never gonna be less than OK for me - give me a crime, give me a few potential suspects, and we're off.

However, there are a few critical flaws with this book that I couldn't get over for the duration. First, the prose feels stilted and not all that sophisticated - this feels at times like the language/dialogue belongs in a YA novel. Second, while I understand that the author is proud of his hometown and wants to give his novel a sense of "place", but he often goes too far, with passages like "he pulled up to the house near the University of St. Thomas, on the corner of Marshall and Cretin avenue", almost like he's hoping that local readers will enjoy it more because they can say "hey! I live right near there!!". That was tiring.

Finally, the climax and denouement felt rushed, which was odd considering that many other parts of the book felt unnecessarily exhaustive. I understand keeping your secrets until the end, but the last few pages were basically a laundry list of "oh, by the way, here's who did what and how everything turned out" - it felt artless.

So, as mysteries go, it's fine, but there are many better ones out there.
