



Skeleton Canyon

J.A. Jance

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Top ten New York Times bestselling author J.A. Jance brings us another mesmerizing thriller featuring Arizona Sheriff Joanna Brady as she searches for the brutal killer of a young girl.

Brianna "Bree" O'Brien never returned from Skeleton Canyon. Someone brutally murdered the pretty, popular teenager who had stolen away under cover of darkness to rendezvous with her boyfriend. Perhaps youthful rage, jealousy and savage passion cost young Bree her life. Or maybe she stumbled onto something too dangerous to know. Sheriff Joanna Brady of Cochise County knows only too well the pain of losing a loved one to violence. But she is disturbed by the O'Brien's insistence that Bree's boyfriend is responsible for their daughter's slaying. Joanna senses there are words not being spoken, and dark mysteries locked behind doors of the sprawling O'Brien family compound. But it is the strange disappearance of a good friend that is pulling Sheriff Brady ever closer to the lethal nest of lies, greed and secrets hiding in a desolate corner of the Arizona desert - where the next blood that feeds the parched, cracked earth could be her own.

Skeleton Canyon Details

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Author : J.A. Jance

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From Reader Review Skeleton Canyon for online ebook

Debfiddle says

Brianna "Bree" O'Brien never returned from Skeleton Canyon. Someone brutally murdered the pretty, popular teenager who had stolen away under cover of darkness to rendezvous with her boyfriend. Perhaps youthful rage, jealousy and savage passion cost young Bree her life. Or maybe she stumbled onto something too dangerous to know. Sheriff Joanna Brady of Cochise County knows only too well the pain of losing a loved one to violence. But she is disturbed by the O'Brien's insistence that Bree's boyfriend is responsible for their daughter's slaying. Joanna senses there are words not being spoken, and dark mysteries locked behind doors of the sprawling O'Brien family compound. But it is the strange disappearance of a good friend that is pulling Sheriff Brady ever closer to the lethal nest of lies, greed and secrets hiding in a desolate corner of the Arizona desert - where the next blood that feeds the parched, cracked earth could be her own. Bree is not murdered by her boyfriend, but by a cartel that want to use the O'Brien's land to smuggle freon, now illegal in the states passing through their land. She's in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Donna says

This author is a constant 3 stars for me. I like that her stories are clean, content wise. Sometimes, that is exactly what I'm in the mood for. She also creates warm and personable characters. They all seem like the people you'd expect to find next door in a small country town. For being a series, I liked that the characters are moving on and progressing.

I really liked the beginning of this book. I thought that this was definitely the best one yet. However, the last half, as the plot was supposed to thicken, it wasn't able to sustain that same vibe. The climax was a bit of a let down and the "big" reveals were not big or dramatic. So 3 stars.

Allison says

Hey, this time ethnic slurs were only used by people who were confirmed racists and also bad guys! (And once by a Mexican character in a joke, in a usage I think qualifies as reclaiming.) And the good guy characters are appalled by the racism exhibited by the bad guys (one of whom ends up seeing the error of his ways and deciding being a racist, that's no good), and Joanna at one point corrects a good guy character's annoyance about Spanish words -- when she corrects his pronunciation of one (he is a transplanted Midwesterner), he grumps about what happened to good old English, and she responds, "You mean like Minnesota? Or Illinois?"

So, loads better than previous books. Good work on that front.

Ginny says

This was the best of the series so far. Joanna has matured as a politician and a sheriff. The story is woven

together well. Conflicts between the whites and people of Mexican descent are one of the focuses of this story as are the hopes and dreams parents have for their children and the children's needs to be independent of those dreams.

Bookmom says

With this series we're sometimes told right up front who the bad guy is, name and all. Other times we're given some insight into the murderer, but don't know who they are until much later. With this story we're kept in the dark about the who and why until quite far into the book when looking into the murder of a teenager who'd gone missing.

On the home front, both Joanna and Jenny are dealing with Andy's death a lot better. It's at least 9 months since his death. Jenny is especially doing well since getting Kiddo, the horse from the prior book. But Jenny gets taken to Girl Scout Camp for a couple of weeks and Joanna is definitely having an empty-nest-syndrome feeling going on. So it's a good thing that work is keeping her busy. And speaking of work, things are going better on that front as she's earned the respect of those who work closest with her. Of course not everyone is on the Sheriff Joanna Brady bandwagon; the first female sheriff in AZ.

As like the earlier books in the series, Joanna pulls together the mystery from conversations with many people instead of through interrogation, and I love that aspect of the books. People aren't always comfortable talking with her, but she doesn't grill them, making a huge difference.

We've got a mystery, scenery, drama, surprises, and a few scenes that will make you feel good. You've heard about how dangerous a sudden rainstorm can be in the desert? We learn why. Another aspect of the series I'm enjoying is the vivid description of the terrain and wildlife of the area.

We're constantly learning more about the secondary characters and this one is no exception. For some it's like reading about old friends.

These books could easily be read as stand-alones. There is enough back filler provided without drowning the story in them.

Read from a library book.

Plum-crazy says

I was pretty sure I'd like this as I'd enjoyed "Tombstone Courage"....but this book was far better than I was expecting! A good, entertaining, suspense thriller with strong characters & a likeable heroine in Joanna Brady.

Beverly says

I think out of the books in the series I've read so far this is my favorite. Joanna Brady is coming into her own as the new Sheriff of Cochise County. Not only is she proving that her past experiences can and will help her in her new job, but she's learning from new experiences, methods new to her, and from her peers in the Sheriff's Department. She brings them all together in Skeleton Canyon to solve the murder and smuggling cases occurring within her county.

I also like how the author manages bring the desert to life in her descriptions and how she brings the characters to life by writing about the emotional impact each character is going through. They are easy to read, easy to get back into after setting them down to go about the reader's real life, and she doesn't give away any information that the character's don't also have. The reader solves the mysteries along the way at the same time the characters do.

LadyCalico says

This is one of those books that make me wish Goodreads had a 3.5 rating. I liked this book more than the books I rated 3-stars, but not as much as the others I rated 4-stars. The story gripped me in the beginning and in the ending, but lost me somewhere in the middle, where the writing, relationships, and banter seemed to lose some of their depth and realism. On the other hand, I really, really liked the protagonist who seems more like a real person than the stereotypes of females that I often find in books written by women authors--so girlie that they are more like transvestites than real women with real lives. I found JoAnna very real and very sympathetic. I could relate heart and soul to the "sandwich" theme with her being at the stage of life when you have to shunt your own needs and wants to fourth place while you are busy doing a fancy tap dance trying to deal with both a young child and a difficult parent while also trying to keep food on the table--and keep the table--that's real life for most divorced, widowed, or single women--not worries about whether your Manolo's or Jimmy Choos go better with your Glock.

Sandra Strange says

Good series set in the country area where my daughter, Jana, lives. I like the characterization and the ideals. The mysteries are good puzzles, realistic, with a hint of jeopardy and adventure. They are for mature readers, with some language and frankness about feelings and sexuality (very tasteful and not usually explicit). In this novel, Joanna Brady must solve the murder of a young girl who goes to meet her boyfriend secretly because her parents object because he's Mexican.

Stephanie Jenkins Ortiz Cerrillo says

A Romeo and Juliet scenario on the U.S. and Mexico border intertwined with murders and smuggling. Sheriff Joanna Brady proves she has the ability to question suspects, follow leads and tie together everything like an experienced law officer with years under their belt. When she gives romantic advice to her friend she may have set her up for heartache and danger. I loved the twists and turns in the plot and how it all came together in the end. An excellent read by Jance.

Gerard says

Good narrative. But an OK read.

Julianne says

This is Book #5 of the Joanna Brady Mystery Series. Wonderful! It starts out at a high school football game and ends up with murder and mayhem. In between you have Romeo and Juliet, nuns, smugglers, wild parrots, an abandoned cemetery, a search for Wedgewood China, Girl Scout camp, flash floods, people who elope, racism, at least three drunks, a flying bra, javelina tracks, a helicopter rescue and the fireworks on the Fourth of July.

Which is better in the hot summer of Southern Arizona, a Crown Victoria with air conditioning or an Eagle SUV without? Well, it depends....are the washes running? If so, then you'd best get in the Hummer! This book takes us from Mount Lemmon to Bisbee to Peoria to the Mexican border. And in charge of it all is Joanna Brady, the sheriff of Cochise County. What a woman! In one day she rides a horse in the parade, hosts a wedding at her ranch in the afternoon and presides over the fireworks show that evening. And she does it all with grace, with authority and a gentle sense of humor. I recommend this book and this entire series to anyone who wants to have a wild adventure in reading!

Debra says

This is only my second book by this author and I have enjoyed both. It was a quick read and definitely worth picking up and reading.

Gloria Bernal says

Written in 1997, this one takes place in her home town of Bisbee AZ. My husband enjoyed reading this as he grew up in the area and attended Douglas AZ high school, who was and still is Bisbee's greatest rival. Since the main plot revolves around a cheerleaders murder, it would especially appeal to those that know the area or could relate to those times when relationships between whites and hispanics (especially in border towns) was so frowned on. The mystery of the murder and other subplots is ok, fast reading. She has gone on to do better things, appropriately enough. The main attraction for us in reading this was the locale.

LJ says

SKELETON CANYON - G
Jance, J.A. - 5th Joanna Brady

The sheriff of Cochise County, Arizona, widow Joanna Brady becomes caught up in a deadly family tragedy initiated by a pair of star-crossed lovers, while trying to prove herself in the male-dominated world of law enforcement and struggling to cope with echoes of Tombstone's infamous Clanton gang.

Although I prefer her Beaumont series, I did like the characters in this. However, the plot could have been stronger.
