



Rueful Death

Susan Wittig Albert

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In search of respite, China takes off to St. Theresa's Monastery with her friend Maggie, a former nun. The goal is a brief, tranquil retreat - but there's a conflict at the convent. The mother superior has recently died, and a battle over the future of St. Theresa's suggests that her sudden demise might not have been accidental. Now, China's quest for a replenished spirit takes second place to a more earthbound pursuit: catching a killer...

Rueful Death Details

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From Reader Review Rueful Death for online ebook

Muffin Pam says

China is the best! People are starting to notice that she is basically Nancy Drew with a new look and now they are contacting her to solve their mysteries. In Rueful Death, a convent of nuns is threatened with murder, pyromania, and all kinds of unsavory happenings when they look to China to help them out.

China has about had it with her smothering boyfriend and his weirdo kid so the timing was right to get away from it all. So good - Definitely worth the read:)

Ruth Ellen says

China has come through a difficult Christmas season. She is needing time away from everything and everyone. She goes on a retreat with Maggie to a monastery in west Texas. When she gets there, The Mother abbess asks her to help with some disturbing incidents. Read and see what she uncovers.

Elizabeth says

My mystery club read this China Bayles mystery, set in a monastery in Texas. It was a bit hard to keep all the nuns straight, but the book was predicated on politics within religion--no surprise, of course. The book was a bit of a slog for a while but improved toward the end.

Betty says

inside the sacred world of the monastery

this was a real treat to see what goes on behind the scenes in a nunnery. China shares history and knowledge of herbs while doing her detective/investigative work. She seems a bit rusty. China's conflict of her emotions and her commitment is clearly why everything seems so foggy and she's making multiple missteps. All gets settled surprisingly in the end. The nuns all grapple with a range of emotions, coupled with the politics of "close living" that the rest of us do. They have the followers, leaders, overachievers, dreamers, and the complacents. Everything is big in Texas...including dreams.

Sara Jane says

The back cover says China Bayles is "totally a woman of the nineties." Probably so, but the story was pretty good anyway.

Fredell Boston says

Really enjoyed this China Bayles installment.

In search of peace and quiet, a little reflection and downtime, China goes on retreat to St. Theresa's Monastery with her friend Maggie, a former nun. The goal is a brief, tranquil retreat - but there's a conflict at the convent. The mother superior has recently died, and a battle over the future of St. Theresa's suggests that her sudden demise might not have been accidental. Now, China's quest for a replenished spirit takes second place to a more earthbound pursuit: catching a killer. And, finding the arsonist who has set several small fires at the St. T's. As China deals with the calamities at the monastery, she longs for the quiet and solitude that she came for.

Debbie says

I really enjoy the China Bayles series and not only are they good mysteries, but the herb info is so interesting.

Ann says

When China feels burnt out from all the work at her herb shop, she travels to St. Teresa's, a convent that has rooms for reflection and peaceful vacations. When she arrives, though, it is to a hectic convent in the midst of a battle between keeping the convent as it is or building on to make it into a resort hotel. There have been several suspicious fires and a nun dies in a suspicious manner. China is asked to look into the problems and this leads to a good mystery and to the possible rekindling of an old romantic interest. This was a good book. I enjoy the China Bayles series and Ms. Albert is very good at spinning a mystery.

Rachel N. says

China Bayles is burned out from the holiday season and decides to go on a retreat at a nunnery in the Texas hill country with her friend Maggie who used to be a nun there. Before she can relax China is asked by the abbess to investigate a series of fires and poison pen letters the nuns have been receiving. I like China but I missed her herb shop and her boyfriend McQuaid and best friend Ruby her were barely in this story. I was also a bit annoyed by the introduction of an ex-boyfriend of China's. I do like this series and will continue with it.

Pamela McLaren says

I have to admit, when I began this book I was quite surprised at the main character. China Bayles, a former lawyer who now runs a herb shop, has always been a down to earth, level-headed gal and in this book, she seems to have lost her bearing. But then that is the reason that she decides to go on a retreat at a convent with her friend Maggie, an ex-nun. When she arrives, China is asked to solve a series of small fires. Along the way, she finds that there is more going on than the fires. The two groups living within the walls of the

cloister have two very different attitudes about what should be done with the convent and the fires are only a sign of something much deeper and more deadly.

Another solid mystery from Wittig Albert.

Katey says

In reading books like this, it makes me want to experience the same things that the main character does. In this book, China goes off to a retreat in an abbey, for some relaxation. I wouldn't want to become a nun, but I wouldn't mind experiencing what it would be like, for a day...possibly longer if the first day went ok. But just for the experience.

Even nuns can have secrets up the sleeves of their habits. There was only one murder, occurring near the very end, and the killer wasn't a nun, surprisingly. Usually, a culprit is chosen near the middle of the book, and it turns out not to be that person, as it's too early to close out the book. On to the next book in the series.

Wayne says

This was my fifth China Bayles mystery and I have to say it was excellent. What made it so interesting for me was that it took place in a monastery. The greed and politics that went on with the nuns was eye-opening. The mystery itself was quite good. It was involved but I pretty much figured out what was going on as far as the money end of the situation was concerned.

Albert tends to go overboard with details. I hope she curtails that in future volumes but I doubt she will. I found myself skipping ahead when I can to paragraphs that went into too much detail about herbs and clothing. Maybe she throws this padding in for the female contingency. However, I've heard quite a number of females say they dislike all the details themselves.

I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in cozy mysteries. It's not Ngaio Marsh or Margery Allingham calibre of writing but, considering how low rent mystery writing is these days, the China Bayles series is one of the better ones.

Larraine says

After several "heavier" books, I was ready for something light. In this case an old China Bayles mystery from 1995 that I missed. China is feeling overwhelmed. Christmas was crazy at her shop, she worked on a full out perfect Christmas which was successful, but....she is TIRED. She jumps at the chance to take a 2 week retreat at a convent run by an order of monastic nuns. Her friend, Maggie, who operates a very popular local restaurant is a former member of the order. She's also not sure of her relationship with McQuaid and is young son, Brian. Concerns about losing her independence are a common theme in these books, so I wasn't surprised. Her plan is to relax, read and take lots of walks.

Unfortunately, Maggie has promised that China would look into some fires that have sprung up over the last few months. Then there are the accusatory letters. Before she knows it, China is investigating despite her

plan to relax and recharge.

I really enjoyed reading this one. It's a quick read. It literally took me less than 3 days. Now it's back to some heavy reading.

Emily Cullen says

Herbal shop owner China Bayles feels the walls are closing in on her so she goes with her friend on a retreat to Saint Theresa's Monastery. But her peace is short-lived as the Mother Superior asks her to investigate some suspicious incidents going on at the convent and eventually into catching a killer. I really like China, her personality and her relationship with her boyfriend, McQuaid who she is living with, along with his son and various pets! I'm looking forward to the next book in the series!

Vanetra Malone says

It was alright just took me a while to read.
