



Bulls Island: A Lowcountry Tale (Lowcountry Tales Book 9)

Dorothea Benton Frank

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“Dottie Frank’s books are sexy and hilarious. She has staked out the lowcountry of South Carolina as her personal literary property.”

—Pat Conroy, author of *The Prince of Tides*

Bulls Island is a supremely satisfying tale of honor, chance, and star-crossed love, infused with Southern wit, grace, and charm, from the phenomenal *New York Times* bestseller Dorothea Benton Frank. The much beloved author of *Plantation*, *Return to Sullivan’s Island*, *Land of Mango Sunsets*, and a host of other winning novels of the North Carolina lowcountry, Frank stands tall alongside Anne Rivers Siddons, Sue Monk Kidd, Rebecca Wells and the other masters of contemporary southern women’s fiction. Devoted Dottie Frank fans and newcomers alike will adore this sun-drenched story of the uncomfortable homecoming of a former Bulls Islander who plans to transform the unspoiled paradise for profit...and her inevitable reencounter with the scion of a wealthy family whom she once was scheduled to marry until cruel innuendo destroyed their engagement.

Bulls Island: A Lowcountry Tale (Lowcountry Tales Book 9) Details

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From Reader Review Bulls Island: A Lowcountry Tale (Lowcountry Tales Book 9) for online ebook

Sidna says

I bought this book at the library used book store because I am going to a luncheon next month where the author is going to be a speaker. I read one or two of her earlier books, but couldn't remember much about them and thought it would be interesting to read more before I hear her speak.

This book was difficult to finish. Betts, the main female character was o.k., but I didn't understand her reasoning for leaving her fiancé, J.D. (who is from a fabulously wealthy family, of course), when she was pregnant with his child and abandoning her father and sister when her mother was killed in an accident. Betts moved from Charleston to New York, had her baby, and nearly twenty years later she is extremely successful with a toney Park Avenue apartment and a son about to enter Columbia University.

As the book opens, Betts has to return to the South Carolina Lowcountry to oversee a project for her company. In the twenty years since she left, she has kept her son's birth from her family and the child's father. She has also told her son that they have no relatives.

Of course, the former fiancé is now married to a woman who has serious problems with alcohol and prescription drugs. She is also unable to have children, which her husband and his family seem to feel is her fault.

When Betts and J.D. see each other, there is immediate heat and Betts tells us that it is only a matter of time before they tear off each other's clothes, although as the book goes on, she seems to have lost interest in that and wants to move slowly into this relationship. That didn't make sense to me for two people who have a child together. There is also a plot with a guy named Vinny that goes nowhere.

As some of the other reviewers have said, the ending is abrupt and everything is tied up too neatly. It is almost as if the author wanted to fill 300 pages and when she hit that mark, decided it was time to end the book. An o.k. read if you have nothing else to do.

Beth says

I was able to read an advance reviewer copy of this book. It was an enjoyable read, although I think the end wrapped up waaaay too quickly and neatly. Also, I expected to get a lot more feel for the South Carolina low country, but this was just about the character's relationships.

Kelly Moran says

One word to describe Bulls Island, by Dorothea Benton Frank- mesmerizing!

New York Times bestselling author, Dorothea Benton Frank was born and raised on Sullivans Island, South

Carolina. Today, her and her husband, Peter, divide their time between New York and Charleston. They have two children in college.

A tale between two rivaling families- The Langley's, high and mighty, with more money than an army would know what to do with, have been feuding with the Barrett family since seemingly the dawn of time. As if right out of a Shakespearian play, J.D. Langley and Betts McGee fall in love, much to the dismay of their families. But after a tragic accident ends their engagement, Betts leaves Charleston and flees to New York to begin again; leaving behind her family, the love of her life, and her best friend. Twenty years later, Betts is preparing her son for college and has comfortably left her past behind her. That is, until her company, where she is a top investment bank executive, decides to take on the Bulls Island project. Forced back to the home she thought she would never see again, Betts comes face to face with everything and everyone she tried so very hard to forget. As if the project wasn't demanding enough, she has to encounter her erratic sister, her estranged father, J.D.'s psychotically cruel mother, and hold onto a secret that threatens to strip away all that she holds dear. Oh yeah, and attempt to not fall in love with J.D. all over again.

Bulls Island is a power-packed thrill ride designed to tear apart every emotional strand and your being.

Dorothea Benton Frank's clever and quirky dialog keep you engaged from cover to cover. It was immensely difficult to put down. Be prepared to get very little sleep until finished. The characters, even the secondary ones, were believable, endearing, and charming- down to every last flaw. The setting was phenomenal, making me miss my own family and comforts of my southern home. The plot flowed well and I couldn't find a dead spot to save my life. Between the action sequences, the heart-break, the confusion, the fury, and the laughter... well, needlessly stated, it was a great title from truly a gifted author. Dorothy Benton Frank leaves her readers contented, satisfied, and overwhelmingly pleased. I can hardly wait for the next one.

Kelly Moran,
Author and Reviewer

Wendy says

This book surprised me a bit and is now one of my favorite books by Miss Dottie. It's a little different than other Lowcountry Tales. However, the sense of humor and feel of the Charleston (Mt P) area is as present here as in all of her books. I truly enjoyed reading about the conflicts of the old Charleston families as well as the conflicts of island developments. I would have loved to have had both conflicts developed even more. There was a lot of potential for this book to have been more than just a chic beach read (though there is nothing wrong with that). I just think the author has more to offer. It ended a little too quickly and neatly but that's the genre. Have to admit I thought the "guy" conversations needed to be a little more "guy" like. I liked the introduction of a little intrigue. Once again, it needed more development. It suited the genre. With the passion the author has for Charleston and the how much she has grown as I writer, I would love to read something by her with a little more substance than this genre usually affords. Go Dottie!

Leane says

Essay read. Not her best with a rushed ending.

Donna says

not as good as her others, a financial expert is sent to her hometown to work on a project with her ex-fiance to develop a former wildlife refuge.

Amy says

I like reading DBF because I basically am somewhat of a narcissist -- I like reading about Charleston, my town. I like when I recognize places and even the occasional real life person featured in the book. Usually, the books are good natured enough to amuse me -- what I consider a light read between the heavier tomes I sometimes read. This book, though, pretty much upset me from the get-go because of two essential plot devices: the selling of Bull's island to developers, and Bett's secret about her son Adrian. And yes, I know it's all fiction, but Bett's son is about the age of my own, and to even fictionally rob a boy and a man of a warm and loving father-son relationship is criminal. The story was well played out, characters a bit stereotypical (said the girl who was told by another Ashley Hall student when I moved to Charleston that I was the only Yankee she'd never hated -- not that she liked me. She just didn't hate me. So yes, that kind of bigotry does exist. In this case, JD's mama, while meaner than a snake, just struck me as over the top.)

So, I'll admit, the faults with this book, are more my own. And yes, I'll keep reading Dottie. She has a way with words when it comes to my town. (But *please* get the audio version to to pronounce pluff mud correctly! Plow Mud???? Ack!!!

Leigh Hunt says

I love Dorothy Benton Frank's books but the quality of her work has dropped off sharply with her last several books. Bulls Island felt rushed. Like she'd slapped it together in a month or two. It was too predictable and lacked the magic of Plantation or even Pawley's Island. It was a struggle to finish Bulls Island. I didn't find Bett to be particularly likeable either.

Lydia M. says

Still struggling to finish. I love this writer so I will keep at it.

Michelle Elizabeth says

Another good read by Dorthea Benton Frank. She is the queen of, "I did not see that coming".

Johnny says

I'm not going to try my hand at a hate review because this review of Guy Fieri's restaurant happened 5 years ago and I still don't feel like trying to enter the arena.

I picked this book up because I've been to Bulls Island, and because my dad loves Bulls Island, and because the Lowcountry is half of my family, and because I thought I'd get some good Charleston in with it.

This book is bad. I read it compulsively over two days. I'm going to spoil the book, so read with caution.

The book (mostly) follows Betts, a Charleston born, Manhattan based account executive for a large firm in New York City. Betts is the mother of Adrian, a well-adjusted high school senior who is calmly applying to colleges. Betts moved to New York City 20 years ago, soon after an argument between her fiance J.D.'s family and her own family led her parents to drive home in a storm, during which her mother was killed by a truck driver. She was with child via J.D. This child is Adrian. No one knows Adrian exists except for Betts.

Blamed for their deaths by her sister Joanie, Betts broke the engagement, cut all ties with everyone in Charleston besides her best friend Selah, who opened a bar named after her ex-N.F.L. Irish police chief husband, Ed O'Farrell. Soon after Betts moved north, J.D. (who gets a few first-person chapters sprinkled randomly through the book) hooked up with Valerie, a southern belle, and married her after getting caught sleeping with her by his aunt and uncle. Valerie now has a substance abuse problem, which is referred to often and with a certain sanctimonious glee, brought on by her infertility. Valerie and J.D. live on J.D.'s family estate with J.D.'s mother and father, Louisa and Big Jim respectively, and the housekeeper, a former stripper who Big Jim impregnated and tried to marry, and her son, Mickey, J.D.'s half-brother.

Betts is assigned to a development in Bulls Island by her boss, Bruner, and balks on account of having to return to Charleston. Before she goes, she begins hooking up with Vinny, a Jersey mafia guy who treats her very nicely. She goes, and takes her secretary Sandi with her, who has a brother Cam who lives outside of Charleston, who will later marry Joanie. She reunites slowly with people, J.D. breaks up slowly with Valerie, everyone finds out quickly about the children and everything, and in the middle a boat blows up and kills Betts' boss Bruner. At the end, Betts and J.D. are taking it slow. If there is a thing that is bad about this book relative to what it's supposed to be, it is that we don't even get a kiss between J.D. and Betts. What is that?

This is my first official beach book. The beach book doesn't require you to give it long, uninterrupted periods of focus: by reminding you what just happened and clearly telegraphing what is happening and, at times, not even describing what has happened but instead referring to it as if it had already happened, you are free to move about the conversations happening around you, the scenery happening around you, the everything of the world happening around you. Bulls Island, the beach book at its lowest common denominator, requires nothing of you but a desire for suspense and regret rehabilitated into joy.

Christy says

I'm surprised I didn't like this more as I have read other books by Frank and really enjoyed them. I thought the dialogue in this book was trite - who really talks this way? My other dislike was that it wrapped-up far too quickly. As I said, I've enjoyed other her other books immensely, so I'll read more, but if this were my first from this author, I wouldn't be back!

Leslie Blanchard says

This is hands-down my favorite author. She writes about the lowcountry (Charleston area), but anyone would love them...and be lining up to visit the area! Her characters show up in her diff novels, but you can read them in any order. I'm currently reading "Pawley's Island"...I read all the others in the past year and can't get enough. You'll find yourself laughing out loud and making friends with the characters. Reading Dorothea Benton Frank is like a mini-vacation, wherever you are!

Marleen says

I can always count on Dorothea Benton Frank for a satisfying read, bringing humor alongside good story-telling. When I feel like escaping to the SC Low Country, an area I particularly love, DBF's books are my go-to. Her stories are always well-written and mostly well-plotted, although I do detect a pattern: in more than one book, the main character returns from New York to Charleston, for either business or family. I enjoy both backdrops (New York and Charleston), so I'm good with that!

Besides family dynamics, and too many well-kept secrets, the author also tackles the interesting issue of environmental preservation in the area – in this case on Bulls Island.

What I particularly enjoyed were the flawed characters: Betts McGee, a New York private equity wizard, and single mom, and J.D. Langley, a rich, disillusioned, and somewhat blasé Charlestonian real estate developer. Eighteen years ago, Betts and J.D. were engaged but a dramatic turn of events brought all that to a halt and Betts left everyone, and that includes her own family, to live in New York.

You guessed it: the drama ensues when Betts is sent by her boss to take the lead in a business deal back in Charleston. The secondary characters were also engaging – except perhaps J.D.'s Mom – who's one particularly difficult and nasty lady.

What I took pleasure in was the authenticity of Betts and Sela's friendship. Their conversations over the phone felt real – that is the way true best friends talk to each other: being sincere and not holding back.

3,75

Michele Minor says

This book is about two young people who were engaged but due to circumstances in their lives separated. J.D. Langley's family did not approve of his fiancée Betts McGee. After she tragically loses her mother she moves to New York cutting off all contact from her family in Charleston, SC. J.D. is stuck in a loveless marriage when circumstances bring the two together again with Betts keeping a huge secret from everyone. This is a good beach read since it is set in a coastal town and the storyline is easy to follow.
