



Bodie

Anne Sweazy-Kulju

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"Blowing out the exhale, he tipped his hat at the few still-breathing horses. 'Don't worry; you'll be dead 'fore the buzzards gather to pick at ya.' Parker squinted up at the sun and saw buzzards were circling overhead already. 'I think,' he laughed cruelly." Lara and Lainy survived foster care and all its horrors, but the experience left them incomplete in that they had no knowledge of the people they came from. Unknowingly, until now, each of them has had a reoccurring dream for more years than they can remember-the same dream. When the girls are regressed by a therapist anxious to publish their story, they learn shocking details about themselves, an unsolved murder in Bodie, California, and a massive cover-up. They want to investigate-but a mining executive can't allow the "Dream Sisters" to go poking around Bodie, anymore than he could allow the therapist to go public and threaten his thirty-five million dollar deal. Are the "Bad Men From Bodie" really dead? Join Lainy and Lara as they dig up shocking secrets in Bodie. Based on a true story.

Bodie Details

Date : Published September 17th 2013 by Tate Publishing & Enterprises

ISBN : 9781625107954

Author : Anne Sweazy-Kulju

Format : Paperback 308 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Mystery

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From Reader Review Bodie for online ebook

Jay says

I often will have a hard time reading a book that covers two entirely different times but Sweazy-Kulju is a master storyteller with the ability to just transport you from time and place without you feeling the transition. I loved this book like I haven't loved a book in a long time. I immediately became immersed in the story and loved so much the premise of sisters having the same exact recurring dream.

This thriller doesn't ask anything of you, not to believe anything unbelievable, not to accept anything that you wouldn't normally. It's just a great story about sisterly family bonds, and the strong ties that every single one of us as humans has to the past.

You won't be sorry you read this one. Looking forward to more from this author.

Grady says

Tandem Dreams: Mystery, History, Romance

Oregon author Anne Sweazy-Kulju migrated from Southern California to the bliss of Oregon coast to establish a Bed & Breakfast Inn and began her writing career with recipe books for her new venture. Captured by the muse to write (her genetic lines could have suggested that being the granddaughter of an Irish storyteller and the daughter of a history teacher) she has turned to the genre of historical fiction - truth tainted by some sting of fantasy that makes her brand of writing have a flair of irresistible charm.

BODIE is an actual place, still in existence though now a ghost town, and for some history searching we learn that it is one of the most authentic abandoned gold-mining towns of the Old West, reputed to be a "ghost" town in another sense: Bodie is inhabited by ghosts who guard the town against pilferers. Supposedly, a visitor who dares to remove any artifact can be plagued by the dreaded "curse of Bodie." The town of Bodie was as rough and tumble as any boomtown at the height of a gold rush. Fights and murders were an everyday occurrence on the streets and in the saloons of Bodie. There is a story that says the town was so notoriously lawless that a young girl upon hearing that her family was moving to Bodie was overheard praying, "Goodbye God, I'm going to Bodie." The town's Methodist minister, Reverend F.M. Warrington, commented that the town of Bodie was a "sea of sin, lashed by the tempests of lust and passion." This then is the historical setting Anne Sweazy-Kulju has selected for her mesmerizing tale set in both the late 19th century and the present day. She opens her book with a Wild West slaughter that includes a murder that will serve as a prominent detail in her book. In the contemporary setting we met Lara and Lainy who as orphans in demeaning foster care homes shared one thing in common - recurring dreams that frighten each of the now mature women, and result in regression therapy that unlocks secrets of a still unsolved murder in Bodie. Their paired attempts to investigate are thwarted by a mining executive of a mining company who doesn't wish to have the secrets uncovered.

Anne Sweazy-Kulju manages to sculpt a bit of true historical data into a ghost story that reads quickly, so driven in the plot line to the end, that we feel as participants instead of merely on-lookers. Solid writing from a new author with a future.

Anne Sweazy-Kulju says

The Ghosts of Bodie Harbor Violent Memories...Any of Them Yours?

Two sisters sharing a psychic dream investigate and uncover a 120-year old murder mystery, a century-old love story, and a political conspiracy that transcends time.

Bad whiskey, bad weather...bad men? BODIE, the most violent town in America's history, blames them for the town's legendary murder-a-day average and a violent history, circa 1879, that just will-not-die. Indeed, a dangerous conspiracy among villainous men and a wicked woman seems to be the one thing that endures.

The story takes place in both the 1870's and the 1990's, with many characters intertwined in time and place. Two orphaned sisters sharing a psychic dream—and a host of abandonment issues, have one foot in each century until a past-life regression bridges the gap. What follows is a deadly cat-and-mouse game with a hired assassin in Bodie, now a California State Park. They'll discover Bodie harbors many violent memories—any of them yours?

Oh yeah, the story is inspired by a true story--my own!

<http://smile.amazon.com/Bodie-Anne-Sw...>

Abuela says

I enjoyed the book, having recently moved somewhat near the ghost towns of California, and I found the sisters appealing characters, although I had a little trouble suspending my disbelief about their dreams reenacting history and the psychic capabilities. What spoiled it more, though, was the sloppy editing for common mistakes. It looks like spell check was the only editor for this edition. Apostrophes appeared where they needn't, and were missing when necessary, perhaps a dozen times throughout the book. "Passed" was used instead of "past," and "descent" was "decent." Each of these is a minor infraction, but stopped the flow of the story each time, and cast doubt upon the author's craft when that flow was stopped. I feel bad picking on these details, but they did affect my reading of an otherwise entertaining read.

LAWonder10 says

If you like history, Ghost Towns, and the unexplainable, this is the book for you.

This is an intense mystery about twin sisters, re-occurring dreams, and both historical and contemporary fiction. The twins had a less than desirable childhood but survived resulting in a very strong bond between them. The older sister, Lara, was very protective and intuitive. The younger sister, Lainy, was more trusting and somewhat lacking in wisdom. They knew of no other kinfolk nor where they came from. Events soon began unfolding in very mysterious ways. In order to receive answers, it was decided they would have to take a trip to Bodie, California... Would it be their last trip? Would the answers remain a mystery?

The suspense holds the reader's interest to the very end.

This was a well-written novel based on a true story. The adventures are continuous and the reader never becomes disinterested. It encompasses some interesting theories.

The characters are portrayed very realistically, and the background scenes are described vividly. The Book Cover is highly lacking in effectiveness. It definitely needs more eye-catching augmentation. The title is also lacking in appeal. Something about the ghost town or murder needed to be added to boost one's curiosity.

The book is not recommended for YA due to crude language and a slight amount of profanity.

My review of this book offers a Four Stars rating.

This was sent to me by the author for an honest review of which I have given.

Andrea Smith says

I had a lot of questions for Anne Sweazy-Kulju but instead of taking up too much of her time I will instead sing her praises. I think it is cool how Bodie stands out as a unique book. This novel is based on a true story based in Bodie, California. I am guessing the murder and corruption were the actual events as the inspiration for the tale. Now on to the story. Two sisters, Lainy and Lara had their struggles since they were young girls living in a home without love. There are two sisters who share a similar dream. They do not discuss it at first but then a tragic murder sets it in motion as they put the pieces together. Lainy and Lara are the in the present but their dreams are drawn to the past. I think the transition between past and present are flawlessly written. The psychic elements seems plausible and authentic. They travel to Bodie to unravel the mystery of the past. Lara is a married woman with a child. She takes her family along. Lainy has one awful romance after another and is yearning for her Prince Charming. I did not find that part of her character weak or desperate. In fact, it was courageous of her to keep hope that she would find that man for her. She did not try hard to hook a man either. Claire, the perceptive child was a welcome addition as a character. I think children are more perceptive than adults give them credit for. I won't spoil the surprise about their connection. I dream of people I do not recognize. I usually think perhaps I stumbled into someone's dream. If I were stuck in a crisis situation I would want these ladies in my group. They handle pressure well and they come out the victor. There is a killer on their trail and he wants to stop their investigation. That's all I can tell you. Read it and enjoy the ride.

Beverly says

The story of Bodie, an abandoned mining town in the California desert, knits together the violent and mysterious events of 1879 and two Oregon sisters in 1993. The sisters, who share the same vivid dream set in Bodie, seek professional guidance from an academic therapist-hypnotist to understand their dream. This meeting triggers a series of events: clandestine meetings in Washington, DC, murder and the suspense-filled tracking of the sisters by a hired killer in the abandoned town of Bodie. Interwoven in the story of the sisters is the psychic or intuitive ability of one of the sisters and her daughter.

The descriptions are vivid with convincing characters and active dialogue. Bodie is an engrossing story which moves at a good pace. The historical background of Bodie is well researched and provides intriguing twists to the story. However, I found it somewhat confusing to switch back and forth in chapters with different characters, settings and times. The author's approach to the story does seem to require this chapter

switching. Perhaps it would be helpful to readers like me who get confused if the chapter headings (which give dates and location) more clearly and boldly announced the new context. Other concerns include point of view changes within a chapter and some need for basic editing.

Despite these issues, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. The complexities of the plot provide an absorbing read.

James says

I was fortunate enough to receive a copy of this book from a Goodreads First Read giveaway but alas, it was not quite for me. Although the basic premise of the book is good - and I must admit the development of the historic side of the story of Bodie was certainly gripping - I found the writing could be a little awkward at times and didn't especially enjoy the overemphasis on the girls' psychic abilities or the insertion of what I presume to be the author's own religious views. Admittedly these are only minor criticisms and I suppose at the end of the day the book was good - just not quite the sort of thing I like.

Stanley McShane says

Having been to Bodie and spending a good deal of the afternoon exploring the streets and peaking into deserted buildings, it's easy to feel the aura surrounding the high altitude gold ghost town--and yes, a ghost town with the appropriate description. The chilling, haunting wind whispers of stories yet untold and told alike as you peek into the small buildings and note some of the personal belongings left behind--were they abducted by aliens? Apparently not, but the town and the people definitely had a reputation--deservedly so. I loved the way Anne Sweazy Kulju weaved in the 1879 story between the happening in 1993 between two strappy sisters discovering they were each sharing the same eerie dream. They employed a psycho-therapist well-versed in hypnotic regression to open detailed secrets neither of them could have imagined. The author deftly describes the characters and the para-normal experiences that set Lara and Lainy on a mission to solve the mystery of the reoccurring dreams and hopefully to put them to rest. They have no idea there is a much larger issue here than the untimely murder of one of Bodie's very few upright women. Gold was, however, very big business then employing an un-ecological process--and still could be. Historical fiction as always based on some fact--fascinating food for thought--scary as it is. Highly recommend the book--it will definitely pique your interest!

Janis says

Wow! I almost got whiplash reading this book! Its an unusual premise - pastlife regression and psychic dreaming - and the jumping through time keeps it hopping. With it being so unusual I hope the writer can find a way to make it a new series - many people claim to have past lives surely some of them are victims of crime!

Emily Challice says

I really, really enjoyed the book and I am so grateful to have won it in a giveaway and to be one of the first

people to read it. It's not often I pick up a book that I cannot put down. This book, I'm glad to say, was one of them. The story was excellent, I will be looking out for more of Sweazy-Kulju's novels. An excellent read.

Mark Noce says

Bodie has all the elements of adventure, history, and movements through time that make for an intriguing read. I've been to Bodie myself, so I found certain descriptive aspects of the narrative particularly interesting. Although the story held my interest, perhaps the genre itself wasn't quite my cup of tea, hence my average rating. However, I'm sure others may get more out of it than me. Still an enjoyable read.

Maryline M's Bookshelf says

Where to begin... Let's start by saying I absolutely loved this book. The story captivates you from the very first page and it haunts you until you've unraveled the mystery that is "Bodie" and the dream-connection; much like it is for the sisters themselves, who need to dig up all that history so they can put it to rest and find peace themselves. This story really has everything: it's got history and modern day life (until those eventually blend together), it's exciting, thrilling, scary at times but with a hint of romance. Perfect. I really loved the blend between history and present, both through the dream connection and in the relationships between those characters (both "then" and "now"), their plans, hopes, schemes,... History does seem to repeat itself, especially through human flaws and greed, but luckily also through love. Before this book, I had never really given much thought to past lives, destiny, dreams,... but this story really makes you reconsider; although you don't have to believe it to enjoy this book: it captivates you no matter what.

Last note: the book cover is perfect. It gave me chills, it's mysterious, dark, ominous, it breathes history... It's the ideal cover for this book.

'Bodie' by Anne Sweazy-Kulju is out on September 17th 2013.

Go get your copy!

<http://mssbookshelf.blogspot.be/>

Lauren says

It starts fairly slow as the novel introduces its characters, and you can tell that the author tried to mix it up with immediate action, but it seemed a bit cliché to me. It begins in 1878 with a stereotypical mining town, Bodie, where its inhabitants are imaginative but not very memorable. But it really picks up in Chapter 3, when the timeline jumped forward to 1993 and I realized just what I had picked up: a novel that bridges two drastically different time periods in one overarching narrative. I am always a fan of this type of genre, so beginning this chapter was the redeeming quality that the book needed. And it didn't disappoint.

Lainy and Lara are the types of character you wish were in every book; they are dynamic, relatable, and really carry the book. With their dark past in the foster system, you really sympathize for them and I found myself actively rooting for them throughout the entire book. The author does a great job of providing just enough back-story to get a sense of these two sisters but still progressing the story line so it never comes to a

halt.

Maybe it was Sweazy-Kulju's impeccable attention to detail, but I found that this was one of the few mysteries/thrillers that vividly described background information; the focus wasn't always on the suspense. I found this very refreshing and a great attribute to reach readers of all different genres. This book mixed a variety of styles while still staying true to its mystery roots, and this added a whole new level rarely seen in other books.

An overall good, solid read, nothing too complicated or extreme, and is the product of the author's meticulous research on the subject. Definitely recommended.

Carina Grossman says

A page turner from first to last with characters so vibrant they leap off the page and into your dreams. She paints history with an intriguing mysterious love story that spans over a century. Ever had a recurring dream that lingers in your consciousness? Ever shared a dream? This book will have you thinking twice when you do...

Rita Robinson says

An old California mining town comes alive again on the pages of Bodie, swinging through 1878 and 1993 in a psychic drama loaded with good guys and gals and super killer bad ones. Two mistreated foster girls, grown now and reliving their great-grandmother's past through psychic dreams of Bodie set the stage for the players in both centuries to come crawling out of the weathered woodwork in a struggle to set the record straight. Author Anne Sweazy-Kulju, presents lots of action; energetic scenes; some great characters, including a modern-day detective hero, that makes this story come alive, if a little frantic now and then.

Catherine says

I received this book as part of a Firstreads giveaway and this review is an honest opinion of mine. I do think one needs to suspend a lot of belief for this novel. This review contains all sorts of spoilers. The book took me a little more than four hours to read, spread over a few days time.

The plot was pretty good. I'm an eccentric reader, but one of my favourite genres is historical fiction. This gives quite a good experience to Californian gold rush and the experiences of the town of Bodie. I did enjoy much of the back and forth nature of the novel where we started with a few strong aspects of both past and present. It was enjoyable to later read more of what had happened in the past and how much of it had built up to "today" within the novel.

The sisters aspect was a little bit unnecessary. Though I did like their backstory and the dreams they were experiencing... I felt that the sisters aspect was unnecessary. Much of the time, I got confused between the sisters and (to me) their (early) personalities and traits didn't really match the information presented to me later on during the book. I didn't really consider the "sister" aspect necessary, even though I did kind of like

both sisters (the majority of the time). I'll try and explain as best I can on this matter. The idea of presenting the sisters was interesting because one sister displayed certain psychic abilities, essentially "feeding" off the other sister's strange dreams. Yet, this wasn't explained very well as it would only work (in my mind) if both sisters were asleep at the same time. If the psychic sister wasn't asleep at that time, she wouldn't experience it. If the one experiencing the dream wasn't asleep at that time, then the psychic one wouldn't dream it (and the one experiencing it would only see it when they did go to sleep). The idea of having the daughter of the psychic to be displaying psychic abilities also felt unnecessary, especially because it became more of a joke at sometimes. For example, when Lainy's ex-husband shows up to harrass her, Lara makes kind of rude comments mentally and Claire mindreads these from her, needing explanation of course. Yet, this bit was written in such a way that makes me look poorly on both Lara and Jeff, even though they were meant to seem heroic in "saving" Lainy. The portions with Ray (Lainy's ex-husband) were unnecessary and I felt they only served to act as somewhat of a hindrance to my enjoyment of the novel. I think the role of the sisters could have been changed to have Lara as the one experiencing the dreams, cut Lainy out and have Claire (older) display her psychic skills by being the one to experience the dream. Having said that, Lainy is my preferred sister, but I just don't think it works with having both of them as it was a bit confusing (to me) and added a lot of unnecessary points which would have been simpler had there only been one. Later on, the sisters make some extremely poor choices and it almost seems as if they want to be hurt. They even deliberately go towards a closed road and act surprised when they aren't able to escape through the blockade. It just stunned me that they were deliberately doing something so stupid.

As for other characters, I didn't particularly like either Claire or Jeff. Jeff's sense of humour was just awful at times and I felt really pained for the way he was acting towards people under his so-called protection. As a police officer, it was embarrassing that he was thinking of going out to deliberately harm others (especially some innocent magazine selling kid). Even if he wasn't going to do such things, it was such a vile thing for him to threaten other people like that. I think the majority of the Keefe plotline was unnecessary, especially Patrick's wishful relationship with Rachel (and then drunken death). Actually, Patrick's drunken ramblings in the office and the student (Janet) witnessing it was somewhat of a mockery that I thought unnecessary. I though Rachel was a bit underdone, actually, especially for a therapist looking to publish a paper on her "dream sisters". In the end, Claire's storyline was kind of useless. Really useless. I'm sure she was meant to seem like some sort of sweet, young girl. To me, she really just seemed unnecessary. Her real psychic abilities were predominantly unexplained, just that she could see into the minds of her mother and aunt (I don't think I remember reading her doing it to her father). Without her psychic abilities, Jeff could have gone back to the motel and called the police about his missing relatives. They'd realise the same sort of outcome, that Lainy and Lara are the "dream sisters" and they'd all get to the end of the book in the same basic way.

Moving on with characters, I think Jake was my favourite. Sure, he's a bad guy, but I thought the entirety of his actions were justified. His upbringing led him to commit acts of violence towards others, mostly Americans. It was somewhat sweet when he realised what he was doing to Lainy and the way it reminded him of what had happened to his own sister. I think Jake was clearly the best character.

Eventually, we find out the psychic sister isn't really psychic, but that all the characters (most) have come together at the end of the book to play out some violent plot that's been... Well... Basically foretold by the prior events of Bodie. It doesn't really make sense. As I said earlier, it does take a little bit of suspension of belief, but here it's still somewhat unbelievable (even if we do account for supernatural aspects). Are we really to believe that the only reason people have come together here is that they're playing some role? What if these people had died due to other things before coming to Bodie for the finale? Also, it doesn't make sense in that they're not dying in the same manner their former characters did. Rachel's prior character died after a lot of suffering, whereas Rachel didn't. They've also got the gender of Frankie Jr being swapped and played by one of the dream sisters. Other characters just aren't relevant to the events, though, being that

Claire and Jeff don't really have such a role in the play. They're just... well... Not really useful to the outcome. It also seemed silly to have Stan, the police officer, fall in love with Lainy. He said things along the lines of her being the girl in his dreams, yet he only met her once her face was all banged up. His own dreams/ visions seemed silly as well as he only seemed to experience these dreams later, after the events of Bodie. It also seemed kind of sick that he wanted to date Lainy when she was all injured, just because of a dream. It just seemed like he was taking some sort of sick pleasure in her being so wounded.

Despite the character problems, I think it played well to the genre and did have certain mystical elements which could be explained away with a few whimsical happenstances. The reader does need to suspend a lot of practical thinking when reading the novel, but the plot line does make up for it, in some ways.

Uh... I'm a bit indecisive about how I should rank this. Overall, I was incredibly disappointed by the majority of the characters and even the ending of the book. However, I did think that the author put a lot of effort into creating all sorts of settings for us, including various research and scenarios to play out the characters. I'm choosing to rank it as three stars because it wasn't fantastic, but not completely awful. I think that the author needs to refine her characters a bit more, but I may keep an eye out for her work in future.

InD'tale Magazine says

3.5/5.0

“Bodie” is based on a true story. The beginning starts out a bit slowly, but eventually pulls one in with its interesting tale.

Read full review in the 2014 June/July Double Issue of InD’tale Magazine.

Lynda says

Mining towns of the 1800's were well-known for their unbalanced equation of men versus women, gold and silver strikes, saloons, and a few murders. Bodie exemplified this pattern with a little twist; it had at least one murder daily and a large hospital in its desert town in California. In 1879, Touchstone Mining Co. was extremely successful outpacing most of the companies in Bodie and to ensure its continued ventures there were alternative methods employed to guarantee its status. Elise Swazey, an independent, aggressive, persistent widow loved Bodie to her core; the town was her life. Suspicious deaths and her curiosity led her to a discovery so secretive, she paid with her life. Bodie like most mining towns faded to a ghost town with a few standing buildings to denote its presence in history. Bodie held its mystery tight shielded from revelation until a startling occurrence in 1993 jeopardized a thirty-five million dollar deal. Two sisters, Lara and Lainy suffered reoccurring dreams of a beautiful woman from Bodie with such intensity and dread, they reached out to a therapist for hypnosis to find answers. Their regression opened the door to Elsie, her son Frank Jr., Jack Gunn, Morris Parker, and many other citizens of Bodie in 1879. In an effort to garner more information, their therapist Rachel Carrell contacted an old friend who set off a chain of events leading to more deaths and the sisters entangled in a web of deception and a race for survival.

The cover of “Bodie” was interesting with its depiction of an abandoned western building with blood and gold dripping from its title. The prologue piqued interest quickly and the writing with its kaleidoscope of

descriptive phrasing emphasized the colours, sights, smells, and sounds of both past and present so vividly – the imagery was spectacular. The short chapters swung back and forth between the past and present smoothly and the noted dates and locations of the chapters made for easy reading. The development of characters was excellent connecting with the perfect level of anxiousness and fear, tying the past and present effectively mirroring the characters was ingenious. Based on a real ghost town with its roots in mining, “Bodie” was intriguing to read and left me with enough curiosity to search online for more information about it.

Having failed to win a book giveaway for “Bodie”, I purchased the book because its premise intrigued me; it definitely left its mark in my memory.

Linda Marie Marsh says

This story takes place in 1878 AND 1993 and the author has created some amazing and unique characters that intertwine in time and place. Personalities pop off the pages as Anne Sweazy-Kulju lets her incredible imagination take hold.

It's a western alternated with a current murder mystery, political cover-up, a love story and AND and two sisters that share a continuous psychic dream. They have a foot in each century and at the end of the book that gap is closed.

Go ahead and make Lainey and Lara a part of your day...you'll be glad you did.
