



Turtle Baby

Abigail Padgett

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His hair is ebony. His skin is ruddy brown. He is unmistakably Mayan, even at eight months. They call him Acito, or little turtle. In fact, he seems to be as hard-shelled as his animal-spirit namesake. Lucky for him, because he's just survived a near-fatal poisoning. The lab analysis reveals that the toxin found in Acito's body is a rare, deadly herb that has to be carefully cultivated, harvested, and stored. There is no doubt that someone was trying to kill the child. As she pulls strings and makes deals to place Acito in a loving home, Bo must ask herself the unthinkable: who would want to murder a little Indian baby? Could it be the seemingly modest Latino couple paid to care for him? Or his elusive mother, an exotic folk singer clawing her way to the top of the Mexican music scene? Or the strange yanqui hillbilly who performs with her? And where - and who - is Acito's father? Finally, what could possibly be the motive? Despite the not entirely unwelcome distraction of a love affair, Bo pursues a trail of misty clues to the Mexican border town of Tijuana. Here her instincts - and the heightened perceptions that ever haunt and guide her - direct her into a seething brew of drugs and prostitution, stealth, and ambition. But ancient traditions and evil spirits hover over the case, even when Bo escapes to the desert to seek solace from her own demons. And they will lead her to the answers she seeks...in the lair of an obsessed and duplicitous killer.

Turtle Baby Details

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From Reader Review Turtle Baby for online ebook

Susan Ward says

Interesting descriptions of how the manic-depressive brain work. Enjoyed the mystery, too.

Catherine Nobles says

Wow! Abigail Padgett continues to amaze and impress me with her understanding of the bipolar mind, She has a keen understanding of the two-sided coin that is BPD. Plus, she's an outstanding author of mystery/thriller stories.

laudanum at 33 says

If anything, "Turtle Baby" is worth reading because it's 20 years ahead of its time, highlighting a diverse cast of characters that don't normally take center stage in a book series. The protagonist, Bo Bradley, grapples with bipolar disorder, a condition that both helps and hinders her abilities on the job (not to mention her personal life). The rest of the characters aren't the usual cookie cutter supporting types that populate mystery novels either: a Mayan woman and her child, a Mexican social worker, a Cajun doctor, an Islamic black man, a runaway foster child, an Egyptian housewife, an Australian talent manager, a gay couple and a crippled ex-stuntman, to name a few. Usually you have to look to something as recent as Netflix's "Sense8" to find such a diverse cast, and that came out in 2015. Abigail Padgett wrote this in 1995.

Cindy says

I'm enjoying the series but it seems a bit wordy in places. Love the main character and her supportive "cast". The stories are great just a bit to much off the subject at times.

Isabelle says

I really like Bo Bradley and all her quirks. I also like Andrew Lamarche. The mental illness twist in these stories make them very interesting. I also liked the Maya angle in this one.

Becky says

This is my second in the series by Padgett and liked this even more than the first. The author is a clever writer -- using mental illness (manic depressive social worker) and cultural diversity (native American/Mayan culture) as an on going theme. She manages to show both with humor while expanding

politically correct positions. The mystery in this one is quite good -- there are many deaths around young Mayan child, Acito, and the story exposes the extent one goes to survive/advance along the difficult Mexico border towns. I'm not a big mystery series reader, so will take a break but might come back to the third in the series featuring Bo Bradley.

Renee says

This series, on the other hand, I'm eager for more of. Padgett's protagonist, Bo Bradley, is refreshingly original. Bradley is a child protective services case worker in southern California; she's also bipolar. While Padgett's attempts to educate the reader about bipolar illness gets tiresome at times, it also gives Bradley a perspective on things that few others would have.

In this, her third book in the series, Bradley tries to reunite a Mayan baby and her Guatemalan mother. When the mother -- another aspiring singer -- is killed during a performance in Tijuana, Bradley tries to find not only a good home for the baby, but his mother's killer.

Chances are good that a real CPS worker would respond to this book the way I respond to most legal thrillers, but I'm not sure I care. I like Bradley, I liked the plot and I liked the fact that I was surprised at the end. About the only thing I'm not liking right now is how few other books Padgett's written.

John says

I highly recommend this book and the "Bo Bradley" series. Her writing is superb and her research of the material that goes into her books does credit to the subjects that she uses to flesh out her characters. I have loved each book in this series more than the previous.

Judie says

Bo Bradley, a San Diego social worker employed as an investigator for the Children's Protective Services Department, is assigned a case regarding a Mayan child who has been poisoned while being cared for by a Latino couple while his mother pursues her singing career. The child is called Acito, Little Turtle. The poison is very rare, must be carefully cultivated and stored, and is usually fatal.

Relying on her acute instincts, brought about by her manic/depressive condition, Bo travels not only to find the person who poisoned Acito but also to figure out why, to find his mother, and to find a home for him. While learning about the Mayan culture, Bo finds out that among the Mayan, deformities were considered gifts by the ancient Maya. "A cleft palate or club foot, an extra finger or crossed eyes--any departure from the physical norm was evidence of the god's favor.... Often a baby's head was wrapped to flatten its forehead so the child would become godlike."

TURTLE BABY has many twists and turns and maintained my interest. The writing is crisp, the characters believable and likable, and the answer to the poisoning question totally unexpected. My only criticism is that some of the situations are a bit too contrived: The person just happened to be in the right remote location at the exactly correct moment.

This is the third of the series and all of them are good reads.

Pam says

Another good book in the Bo Bradley mystery series. Bo is a complicated, but caring individual.
