



Desert Cut

Betty Webb

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While scouting locations for a film documentary on the Arizona's Apache Wars, private investigator Lena Jones and Oscar-winning director Warren Quinn, discover the mutilated body of a young girl. The gruesome manner of the child's death evokes memories of Lena's own rough childhood. Clashing with the local law, Lena's investigation uncovers a small town with a big secret. Los Perdidos is not the Eden it first appears. Founded by the descendants of pioneers who fought Geronimo, the townspeople have now armed themselves against the hordes of illegal immigrants streaming across the Arizona/Mexico border. A significant population of documented foreign-born residents also lives and works in Los Perdidos at a modern plant. Lena senses a sinister force at work in the town--but where? Then two more girls disappear from Los Perdidos, and as the death toll mounts, Lena is tempted to implement some frontier justice of her own. When she finally unmask the killer, she discovers a chain of horrific crimes responsible for subjugating millions of girls and women around the globe. In Desert Cut, the still vivid memory of Geronimo's war mixes with the modern immigration war, the hard life on the Arizona/Mexico border contrasts with Hollywood's slick production meetings, and the cruelty of an ancient practice is tempered by a growing underground railroad fighting to save its young victims.

Desert Cut Details

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From Reader Review Desert Cut for online ebook

Holly Morey says

The 5th book in the Lena Jones series again has an interesting plot and an unexpected villain. The problem I have with this book is not necessarily with the storyline but more with the editing and printing. There were way too many errors in the printing of the book and it almost got distracting. Lena and Warren found a dead 7 year old girl in the desert. Lena began to reminisce about her own past and had to find out what happened to Precious Doe. Lena discovers a world where little girls have their genitals removed without anesthesia and the results can be deadly. Again the story line is educational and the mystery is well written. The publishing company needs to improve on the printing.

Tory Wagner says

Desert Cut, Lena Jones Mystery #5 by Betty Webb continues the story of Lena Jones, a private investigator living in Arizona. As with the other books in this series, Webb explores women's issues, in this one the African tradition of cutting young girls to make them pure. The action is intense and Webb's treatment of the topic pulls no punches, but the book is, at its heart, a mystery where the "good guys" win. I'm looking forward to reading the next in this series.

Ellen says

I had to give this book one star because of the inaccuracy of the setting. I happen to live in Cochise County Arizona, and there were so many errors in the author's depiction of the area that it was distracting. The book might have been at least three stars if she had done her research before writing the book. For instance, the San Pedro River runs north from Mexico, not south to Mexico. There is very little water in the river except during monsoon. I doubt that teenagers hang out at the river in the evening. I began to wonder about the inaccuracy of the rest of her book. I won't talk about that, as it would tell too much about the book. I can understand fictional towns—that's ok, but get the rest of it straight, and know how the police system works.

By the way, I listened to this book.

Betty says

I have long been a fan of the Lena Jones series. Somehow I seem to lose them at times. The stories all cover human abuse especially if girls and woman. This one's cover one that is horrible. Lena Jones a private investigator after a bullet wound ended her career at the Scottsdale Police Department. Lena was found as a child laying on Phoenix street with a bullet in her head. No one ever claimed her and Lena lost her memory. She grew up in a series foster homes, most of them bad. This underlying story is added in each book. In this book, while relaxing with her boyfriend, Warren she finds the body of a dark skin child buried in the desert. This discovery remains her of own background. She is determined to find out who and why Princess For was killed. As Lena investigates against all odds is shocked and horrific by what she uncovers. Lena has

a flashback to her childhood and finds a picture of the white bus. I know I have miss others and plan on reading. I recommend this series.

Melodie says

I really like this series and haven't been able to figure out why it doesn't get more notice. Webb is an excellent writer and she does her research on her subject matter. In this one, Lena is trying for some much needed R&R with her new male "companion", boyfriend is a term that just doesn't seem right, when they come across the body of a little girl in a shallow grave while they're out horseback riding. Lena can't shake the image of the child as it strikes close to home for her. The child's cause of death and what's going on with the female immigrant population is abhorrent. The ending was a bit of a surprise and this one was gripping read! RECOMMEND!

Nancy says

This is the first book I've read by Webb, though it is not the first in the series, so I cannot comment on the development of the lead character, Lena Jones. It was a good mystery that brought to light a practice, FGM, that does, in fact, happen in the United States. The story is fast-paced, has substance, but does not bog down as if the information is thrown into the story in indigestible chunks. Maybe enjoyable isn't the right word, given the subject matter, but a satisfying read that just might serve to raise awareness.

Gail says

Lena Jones and her Hollywood lover are on a vacation/working trip when they discover the body of a young girl hastily buried in the desert. Precious Doe, as she's named, seems to be linked to another disappearance a few years earlier. Both girls are immigrants, one from Africa and one from the Middle East.

Compelled to bring answers and justice to a small abused child, Lena begins to investigate, much to the anger of the remote Arizona town. She uncovers the continuations of a brutal practice brought to the desert from their native lands.

Compelling, absorbing and strong, this mystery is an unflinching look at some of the world-wide abusive practices that suppress, mutilate, and kill women. As always, Lena is also reliving and retrieving parts of her mysterious past.

Susan Gardiner says

I have been reading this series in order and have really enjoyed the character development of Lena Jones as she unravels the mystery of her past along with the murder mysteries she encounters in each book. Also, I love Betty Webb's sense of place in her writing. Along with Jon Talton's Mapstone series I have developed a real love for Phoenix area, warts and all. Betty's subject matter can be intense but it is always based on real,

current day issues important not only to her character, Lena, but to all of us living in this wonderful country.

Bobbie says

Lena Jones mystery #5. Private eye in Arizona who had a really bad childhood that is never completely explained. Wow, this was heavy but very moving. It starts as a murder mystery but by the end I was literally squirming because of the very real and barbaric subject matter. I was kept guessing as to who the murderer was and why. I was also confused (and a little irritated) by information about Lena that was revealed towards the very end of the book. Am I supposed to read the next book in the series to find out what the information meant? Don't like being "played." Maybe someone can clue me in to what the "evidence" meant? I have enjoyed other books by this author.

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Jamie Brooks says

I really liked this book a lot. I finished it off in about 24 hours. Now, the plot kind of freaked me out, and once you read it you will know why. It saddened me and pissed me off at the same time. The main character was sympathetic and strong and I loved how determined she was to solve the case. I feel like some of the information provided was kinda useless, like the main characters romantic relationship. In the end it had no significance to the plot, but I got over it. The description in this book was really wonderful as well. I didn't think there was too many ways to describe the desert, but I was wrong.

Roger says

A good book.

Donna says

I read a book I didn't like so much, so even though I just finished one of Betty Webb's books, I put in another one because I just needed something I knew I would like. Now I will start by saying that this wasn't my favorite story line out of the 5 I've read, but I liked the writing. I like her descriptive strokes, her characters, her dialogue and many more things.

The mystery/crime part of this was drawn out a little too long, but I didn't see the ending coming. So 4 stars.

Kathy says

Another thought provoking mystery from Betty Webb. Webb is an excellent writer. I have a hard time putting down her novels. But the fact that she mixes in such thought provoking current issues with her mysteries makes her a unique and amazing writer.

Lena Jones, a former Scottsdale, Arizona policewoman now a Private Investigator is a fascinating character herself. Flashbacks to the mysteries of her childhood populate Webb's books. That Jones has endured a horrific childhood allows her to be appropriately sympathetic to the young victims she encounters. While I don't want to give away what Jones discovers in Los Perdidos, I want you to know that this book will haunt you. Next up: Desert Lost.

Wanda says

Good mystery. Deals with trust issues for people who have had bad experiences growing up. It also deals with cultural traditions brought to the U.S. by foreigners and how people here react to them. Shows how terrible some of these traditions are and the battle to change them. Lots going on throughout the book. The main character is strong considering what she has been thru. Brings to light the horrible action of female genital mutilation.

Arizonagirl says

Lena Jones Mystery, Book #5. This one was harder to read since it dealt with female genital mutilation. I've heard the Betty Webb likes to tackle controversial issues in her books, but this was more than I want from a cozy. I enjoy the Arizona setting and local information.
