



The Tenderness of Thieves

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A summer romance filled with danger and lies

Jane is ready for a fantastic summer. In fact, she's pretty sure the universe owes her one.

This past winter, Jane was held at knifepoint during an armed robbery and the specter of that night still haunts her. A summer romance with one of the town bad boys -- sexy Handel Davies, who takes her breath away and makes her feel like a bolder version of herself -- seems like the universe's way of paying her back.

But bad boys always have secrets, and Handel's secret just might shatter Jane completely.

This suspense novel marries psychological thriller with summer romance and is perfect for teen fans of Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*.

The Tenderness of Thieves Details

Date : Published May 26th 2015 by Philomel

ISBN :

Author : Donna Freitas

Format : Kindle Edition 352 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Mystery

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From Reader Review The Tenderness of Thieves for online ebook

Stephanie says

The book was ok, just EXTREMELY predictable. Her dad got killed by some young guys, about her age? And then she falls in love with the town bad boy, who has a secret....? WHERE DO YOU THINK THIS IS GOING? But overall, that's my only complaint.

Hailey (abookafterbook) says

?? J'ai adoré ce roman! L'écriture de l'auteure est captivante. J'ai dévoré ce bouquin, j'ai adoré les personnages et la romance. Le mystère est très bien écrit et j'ai adoré la fin! Ce roman a presque été un coup de cœur.

?? I loved this novel! The author's writing is captivating. I devoured this book, I loved the characters and romance. The mystery is very well written and I loved the end! This novel has almost been a favorite.

•Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/abookafterb...>

•Blog: <https://abookafterbook.wordpress.com/>

Lucie says

Je regrette d'avoir lu la 4ème de couverture, ce roman est certes prévisible, mais totalement addictif. J'ai vraiment adoré l'héroïne, qui a vécu l'enfer et qui prend conscience qu'elle n'est plus la même. Dans sa quête d'identité elle va tomber sous le charme d'Handel, malgré leur jeune âge (-18 ans) ils vont tout de suite être en connexion. Mais comme tous les bad-boy, il a des secrets et les choses sont loin d'être simple pour débiter une histoire d'amour. Je suis ravie d'avoir découvert une nouvelle auteure qui a réussi à me faire dévorer cette histoire.

Ma chronique : <http://wp.me/p4u7Dl-1WD>

Kelly says

Go for the forbidden romance. Don't go for the thriller angle -- you know who the culprit is from the very beginning, so there's not a payoff in that. Stick around for great atmosphere and a beach town setting.

There isn't a lot of character development, and it's clear that Jane has some PTSD stemming from the night of

her father's murder, as well as some episodic amnesia, but those aren't as pursued textually as they could be.

This reminded me a lot of Sarah Ockler's *The Book of Broken Hearts* in terms of good girls dating bad boys despite the warnings....and done in a way that's not so much about defining what a bad boy is or why a girl would be attracted to him and more about how reputation -- family reputation -- can precede a person.

I didn't love it, but Freitas knows how to WRITE and crafts some gorgeous sentences. And clearly I didn't hate it since I read it to the end to be proven right on the very obvious.

Comp to Gillian Flynn is totally unwarranted.

Paige (Illegal in 3 Countries) says

Awkward, overly-informative writing that assigns characters their traits and leaves it at that, poor characterization, an obvious ending, and more make me regret I paid \$11 for my ebook and I can't return it. I preordered it, so we're far past the return date deadline.

I'd go so far as to call this book half-assed.

Anna (Curiosity comes before Kay) Partrick says

I just seem to be striking out with books lately, and this one was no exception to that rule. I requested this from the tour site that I belong to, because almost four years later I still remember her book *The Survival Kit* fondly. I remembered comparing her to Sarah Dessen and really enjoying myself while reading her books, namely her characters. I read the synopsis to this one and the comparison to *Gone Girl* (a book that, despite the hype, I still haven't read yet) did give me a moment's hesitation. But I decided to request it anyways, even though the synopsis doesn't exactly cover up what the big "secret" Handel's keeping is regarding. I have a soft spot for bad boys. Well, me and this book did not get along.

It started with a phrase the author, narrating as Jane in first person, uses in her thoughts - "me and my girls." That phrase sounds like some sort of animal pack, or something out of a Brooklyn-ized *Mean Girls* revival. This phrase happens at least four times within the first chapter. I flipped through and it happens way more than just that, with "the girls and I" heading chapter thirteen, for example. I am a freak and I know this, fully admitting it right now. But something about that phrase SCREAMS ghetto trash, Maury-show contestant -- or rich, spoiled, partying Daddy's girl. Either way, I cannot STAND that phrase. I have come to the collective realization that I am now officially old in a way that I never was before. Plus, the whole first chapter is a "meeting" between Handel and Jane, where he says her name twice, she says his once and he walks away. Then she goes and rehashes the whole thing to her friends as an "interesting" story. Overall, I think the current generations might like it, but I'm an old lady. I kept thinking to myself, who talks like that? And in what universe are this girl and her friends interesting? Not for me.

VERDICT: DNF, No Star Rating

I reviewed this book as part of **Around the World ARC Tours, run by the lovely Princess Bookie. No money or favors were exchanged for this review. This book's expected publication date is **May 26th**,

Daphne Benedis-Grab says

This book had me from the first page to the final, bittersweet end. Freitas has crafted a gripping story that is equal parts thriller and juicy romance. Her luminous writing brings the complex characters to life and takes readers deep inside this smart and entertaining story. Five stars and two big thumbs up! Not to mention fingers crossed for a sequel...

Hollow says

I have to say...I'm really surprised this book got published. Maybe the author knew someone?

The book is about a normal, dark haired girl named Jane. What does Jane look like? Don't know. Jane has three close friends. What do Jane's friends look like? No idea. Oh but wait! You don't really need to know what they look like because personality is the most crucial part of a character, isn't it. Sadly, none of the characters have any distinct personality.

Jane has been through a lot. Her father died in a town burglary and no suspects have been named. She can't seem to remember much about the incident other than being held at knifepoint and a boy reassuring her he wouldn't let anything happen to her.

Jane soon attracts the attention of the town bad boy (that term is used excessively in the book), Handel Davies.

At this point, which is like page 2, the story is predicted.

SPOILER BELOW!!!

There are only 3 characters in the entire book basically. Jane, Handel, and Miles, a wealthy summer visitor who has a keen interest in Jane.

Nothing happens. Despite there being a love triangle (if you can call it that), there are no real conflicts. She doesn't like Miles, nothing happens between them, nothing happens between Handel and Miles, no fights, no drama, no rising action, no falling action.

It's like being in a really mellow dream where you don't care about the people or what they do because you already know what's going to happen and none of the people strike you in any way. Like shapeless blobs who do normal teenage things but all the good, sexy parts are glossed over.

And the author actually uses the term "African American" ...its that young.

Meh...next!

Katherine says

*It was a day like any other when he first spoke to me.
That boy.
The one who would change everything I thought about life and love and right and wrong.
The one I would change.
But it's dangerous when we let the boys fix the broken parts within us. It makes us vulnerable.
It scars us for life.*

This was literally painful to read. It's been a long time since I read a book that made me feel this way, but this book did. And let me tell you, it wasn't pleasant.

So let's get into the three reasons why you shouldn't read this novel.

First of all, we have a small town girl living in an East Coast Beach town that seems to be only populated by Irish and Italian people. And by Irish and Italian people, **I mean every single stereotype you could possibly find in an Irish or Italian person.** Irish who are so pale they could be mistaken for Cullens, and so hot-tempered that they seem to have fire for personalities. All the Italians have olive skin and dark hair. They were so damn stereotypical that I fully expected the Irish part of the town to have leprechauns popping out from their bushes and the Italians to poop spaghetti and Olive Garden breadsticks. It was just so painful to read about.

And even worse, what the author considers diverse in her characterization consists of (get ready for this)....

two Vodka drinking, Matryoshka doll collecting Russians. Yep, you read that right. That's about as bad as the CW claiming that their remake of Dynasty is 'diverse' because they added **ONE HISPANIC CHARACTER.**

Mom: I believe the term you're looking for is white as Wonder bread, extra bleached.

Second of all, **the mystery element of the book** (which also happens to be the main element of the book) **is utter crap.** I knew exactly who the culprit was not even ten pages into the story, and when I flipped to the ending to not only have my suspicions confirmed, but to have an ending so weak, devoid of emotion, and confounding in manner was all the more disappointing.

*"Mom: You know a book fell off the deep end when they don't get the element of the genre right.
It's what would happen if someone wrote a romance novel but didn't include any romance."*

And finally, the characters were very hard to sympathize with. From the annoying habit the main character had of calling her friends 'my girls' to the stereotypical small town gossip fell the novel had, everything felt off.

"Mom: Did the author think calling them 'my girls' would make the book more hip or something? It's like Taylor Swift and her squad. What the heck happened with just calling people you hang out with your 'buddies'? 'Chum?' This is getting too complicated for me, I'm out."

Apparently this book even confused my own mother, and she didn't even read the damn thing.

In short, this book was bad. Lifetime movie bad. But not Lifetime movie 'it's so bad, it's good.' This is Lifetime movie 'Nuke it from the orbit and never watch it again' bad. The mystery is stupidly simple. The characters all stereotypes within themselves, and a seemingly simplistic plot that fell completely flat.

Marie Rutkoski says

Full disclosure: Donna is a friend of mine, and I read a partial early draft of the manuscript, but I was instantly drawn in (even then, even at such an early stage of the project) by the characters, the delicious atmospheric quality of the beach in winter and summer, and the entire world of this small town by the sea. When I got the final version of this book, I tore through it. I want everyone to read it.

The story is this: last winter, Jane was held at knifepoint during a home break-in, and lost someone dear to her. Now it's summer, and she wants to be whole again, to not be so afraid, to have fun with her girlfriends...and maybe start a romance with one of the town bad boys, Handel. This is a dark beach read, the kind where you feel what it's like both to bake on the sand and to watch the snow over the sea. It's the kind of town where everyone knows Jane's mom, the local dressmaker, and everyone knows how she refuses to sweep her floor all summer, because the sand is a way of inviting the ocean in. A first date is in a secret shack by the sea, cooking freshly caught fish. And the world of the town is fully realized-- the townies and the rich tourists, the local cafe, the cops, the lawbreakers, the mom who wants something better for her youngest son.

If you want forbidden love, this is for you. Rich characters? Moral ambiguity? No easy answers? Yes.

I blurbed it like this:

"Tempting, sexy, and dangerous, this book will steal your heart. I was so worried for Jane, so excited for her first love, and completely lured by the story's dark twists and turns."

I loved it.

Rebecca says

There wasn't much about this book that I liked. The "plot twist" was visible from a mile away and wasn't followed by anything resembling a fulfilling conclusion. The main character and her core group of friends seemed like cardboard cutouts, as they were all carved from the stereotypical hot-girls-who-have-all-the-boys-chasing-after-them trope without any other significant characterization. The romance also seemed very contrived, and was without any serious buildup. The characters considered themselves to be in love before I considered them to even be friends, which was odd and not very satisfying.

Perhaps the part of this book that I appreciated was the way the author conveyed the sea-and-salt-and-sand atmosphere of the East Coast. I did indeed feel the setting's presence, and though I don't much care for the area itself, I could definitely see it in the writing.

Agatha Donkar says

I really loved the premise, and first 95%, of this -- but oh man, the ending was so damn predictable and unsatisfying. I wanted a different payoff, I guess.

Ashley (Loves Books) says

DNF Review...sort of. I read through 100 pages, then skimmed all the rest.

So, I'm going to preface this by saying this: I'm old. I mean, not really—28 is still pretty young. But I'm old on the YA spectrum. Crushes and boys and romance and your friends are old hat to me, and there are definite times I realize I am reading under my age.

The Tenderness of Thieves made it really, really obvious to me.

I get the excitement of a new crush, of a new boy in your life, and I definitely spent many, many hours in my high school years rehashing the 7 second eye-lock and walk-past with my crushes. But it didn't really make for a great read, you know? I was also immediately put off by the author defining who the friends are in their group. I get we all kind of have what we fit into (I myself am the social, responsible one of my friends), but I want to read about these girls and find out for myself. I don't want to be told so-and-so is the reliable, smart one; and the girl to her left is the social butterfly, crazy-antics, head-in-the-clouds one. I want to SEE it, you know? I want the crazy one to try to jump off a lifeguard tower into a moving jeep, but have that smart one hold her back and tell her the dangers, you know? It's all about the show, and this book had a whoooooole bunch of tell.

None of the characters really wowed me, and especially not Handel. I mean, as I skimmed along after the 100 pages, I could see that it had kind of picked up. More personalities were coming out, we started to learn who each was and what made them tick...but it didn't get there fast enough or wholly for me to get really into it.

How they eventually revealed the trauma was interesting, and I thought the details of the night were revealed in the perfect places. I guessed a lot of it – and guessed the “twist” entirely correctly – but it was still done really well in terms of the pacing and direction and slow reveals to shape who a character is.

The Tenderness of Thieves had the potential of a great suspense novel, but fell flat with characters and action to me. I didn't give it a fair reading chance after 100 pages, I admit—but it just wasn't for me.

Stephanie A. says

So you've survived a home invasion in which your father was killed. Your next move, obviously, is to date a member of the local "bad news" family. Who better to make you feel safe? He would probably never rob someone at knifepoint, because he's grown up with people who are so good at obeying the law.

Turns out he is a super boring and tiresome character, and Jane's whiny "my life was ruined when I was

Good so now I have to be the opposite of that to move on" mantra was worse. The only decent people in this whole book are Miles, the charming out-of-town country club boy who deserves so much better than being spurned by Jane and getting nothing out of it, and Michaela, who speaks for us all by pointedly and repeatedly telling Jane how stupid she is being, and is frankly a way better mother than Jane's actual mother.

Joanne says

Originally posted on Once Upon a Bookcase.

I read an article on the Salon several months back written by Donna Freitas, *Sex: The Last Taboo of YA Literature? Not Anymore!*, and it was such a brilliant piece, I had to get my hands on Freitas' latest novel, *The Tenderness of Thieves*. Although sex doesn't play as big a role in the story as I was expecting, *The Tenderness of Thieves* is a really interesting story.

Jane is still coming to terms with the armed robbery in February, during which she was held at knife point and her father was killed. One in a string of robberies in her town, Jane's was the last for months, but those involved have yet to be found, and she's struggling to move on. At the beginning of summer things start to look up for her, though, when one of the town's resident bad boys, Handel Davies, takes an interest in her. As she gets to know him, Jane realises he's not as bad as the reputation that comes with his surname implies, that he's actually a really nice guy who genuinely cares about her. Handel is the distraction she needs from the night that still haunts her, and makes her feel like a brand new Jane. But Handel has a secret darkness, a sadness he can't seem to shake, and what he's hiding from her might shake everything she's come to know as true.

I found *The Tenderness of Thieves* to be quite predictable in that I knew how this book was going to end, even before I ordered it, but knowing the outcome didn't spoil my enjoyment of the story. I thought it was a really sweet romance made more interesting by the fact that Jane is dealing with the terrible ordeal she has been through. She's still grieving her father's death, she's still coping with the fear she felt for her own life, and her solution is to push it all aside and not think about it. And then Handel takes an interest, hot and sexy and with a reputation, and Jane is drawn to him like a magnet. Part of his allure is his reputation, the danger of him because of the family he's from. Jane was the good girl who never believed anything like this could happen to her, but everything changed when the knife was held to her throat and her father was killed, and now being a little bold and reckless makes her feel something other than afraid. Finding out Handel isn't really much of a bad boy at all, but a really good guy doesn't make any difference, because Handel has now woken in Jane feelings and passion she's never felt before. Handel and Jane are just the cutest couple, and I loved reading their romantic moments.

There's also a great portrayal of friendship in *The Tenderness of Thieves*. Jane has and her four friends, Tammy, Bridget and Michaela, are a very close, tight knit group, despite their differences, and theirs is a beautiful friendship, full of love and support, even with the slight disagreements. Except for Michaela. Michaela is highly suspicious of Handel and doesn't trust him at all, so she is completely against Jane's relationship with him.

"Michaela sat down next to Tammy. "Tell what? What did I miss?"

"Sex, apparently." Tammy lowered her voice. "Jane's having sex. With Handel."

Michaela's eyes widened. "Tell me that's not true."

I closed my mouth, which had been hanging open. "It's not. It's absolutely not."

Michaela let out a sigh of relief. "Well, that's excellent news."

[...]

Michaela glared at Tammy. "I thought you said Jane knew her limits."

Tammy made a face. "I didn't say what those limits were. And I've come over to the pro-Handel camp. I thought you had, too. given that he knows your brother and all that."

"I was trying to be nice," Michaela said. "But just because Handel played hockey with my brother doesn't mean he gets to have sex with Jane!" (p226-227)

"I smirked at [Bridget]. "Who knew that you would date a golfer this summer."

"Oh yeah?" She took off her sunglasses and smirked back. "Who knew that you'd be sleeping with Handel Davies every chance you got this summer."

My skin flushed hot. "Not every chance."

"Right," Michaela said, trying to sound bored about it.

"Like you should talk," I said to her. "Ms. I'd-rather-be-kissing-Hugh."

She turned a page in her magazine. "Maybe. But at least I'm not sleeping with him."

"Now you're judging me for having sex?"

This time, when Michaela went to turn her page, she snapped it so hard it tore in half. "Shit," she said under her breath. Then she looked at me. "I'm not judging you for having sex. That's really not it. I'm judging you for having sex with Handel." (p310)

Rather than being a caring friend who shares her worries, she gets angry and judgemental, and tells Jane what she should and shouldn't do. The above quotes are just two examples of this, but there are so many! She doesn't offer an opinion, she dictates and expects to be obeyed. Thankfully Jane has her own mind, but I really didn't like Michaela. That's not how you treat a friend, no matter how much you dislike and distrust their boyfriend.

There was another problem I had with the group of friends, but less to do with their friendship, and more to do with their worth depending on the attention they get from guys. Jane talks about how they always used to dream about being the girls the guys were after, and now they finally were, and talks about the power of walking down the beach in a bikini, hips swaying, the boys watching your every move. They're not necessarily obsessed with what boys think of them, but it's one of the main things they care about.

"You're really good at that, B." Tammy was sincere. "The batting-your-eyelashes thing, I mean."

"You should try it," she said with a slight pout. "Boys love it. All it takes is a little practice." (p191-192)

"Incoming," Tammy interrupted, looking off into the distance, toward the lifeguard chairs at the far end of the beach. Miles and company were headed toward us. "From the left."

"Ooh," Bridget cried. "Make yourselves pretty for the boys!" (p193)

Again, just two examples of many like this. It made me uncomfortable how focused they were on how boys viewed them, like their self-worth depended on it. It's a really unhealthy idea for girls to have, and although probably quite realistic, sadly, I think it's a major flaw as the idea of guys' opinions of girls' bodies being important isn't challenged.

Although I was really interested in how Jane coped with the break in, I would have liked there to have been more to the psychological thriller side of the story, because I didn't feel that enough. Overall, *The Tenderness of Thieves* is a pretty enjoyable story with a sweet if troubled romance at it's heart.
