



By These Ten Bones

Clare B. Dunkle

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There's hidden places all over this land-old, old places. Places with a chain for them to chain up the wolf when it's time.

A bone-chilling tale of werewolves and love, set in medieval Scotland

A mysterious young man has come to a small Highland town. His talent for wood carving soon wins the admiration of the weaver's daughter, Maddie. Fascinated by the silent carver, she sets out to gain his trust, only to find herself drawn into a terrifying secret that threatens everything she loves.

There is an evil presence in the carver's life that cannot be controlled, and Maddie watches her town fall under a shadow. One by one, people begin to die. Caught in the middle, Maddie must decide what matters most to her-and what price she is willing to pay to keep it.

By These Ten Bones Details

Date : Published May 1st 2005 by Henry Holt and Company

ISBN : 9780805074963

Author : Clare B. Dunkle

Format : Hardcover 229 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Paranormal, Shapeshifters, Werewolves, Horror, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review By These Ten Bones for online ebook

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

The story was not as intricate as I would have liked, but the gothic atmosphere was appealing, and I liked Maddie and Carver/Paul's characters. I also liked the message about sacrificial love.

Overall rating: **3.5/5.0 stars**.

Reviewed for Bitten by Books. <http://bittenbybooks.com>.

Arminzerella says

This werewolf tale tells the story of Paul who was bitten by and becomes a werewolf, and Maddie, the girl who learns his secret and loves him enough to try and cure him.

This is a rather spare tale, with a lot of characters who act in ways that aren't always explained. For instance, Paul's traveling companion is pressed into work by one of the townsmen – he's literally chained up and forced to assist with the harvest. The explanation given is that the townsman is sick of seeing him laze about when there is so much work that needs to be done. It just seems odd. Becoming a part of this world was kind of a stretch. It's obviously small and rural and seems to be taking place in the distant past, but it doesn't seem very real. I'm willing to go out on a limb and believe in the werewolves for the sake of the story, but even the more realistic elements seem sketchy.

There are some haunting and scary moments where Maddie sees the shadow of the beast that is part of Paul. The description of the werewolf being something else entirely, and not particularly wolfy, or even something that's integrated with Paul's nature is interesting and could be more thoroughly explored. Other werewolf tales talk about the beast taking over, but it seems like the beast is fully a part of the person, whereas in Paul's case it's like he's been possessed by some kind of demon that just wants to hurt everyone that he loves. It seems like in every werewolf tale that changing is a curse and it automatically makes one an outcast. The werewolf, or the demon that takes over Paul, will destroy everyone and everything in its path if it is loosed.

One thing that this story posits that I've never heard before is that there is a cure for the werewolf. Someone must willingly go to the wolf when he is changed and let it take them. Only that willingness and self-sacrifice will destroy the creature/beast/demon. And they can't run from the wolf either. Brave Maddie does this, and wonder of wonders is not harmed. The beast leaves Paul and they both return to the village and a few pages later, presumably live happily ever after – especially as Paul has already killed the difficult townsman when he was a werewolf the time before.

“By these ten bones” is a promise Paul makes to Maddie – to return. He swears by the bones in his fingers. And these same bones are the claws of the shadow of the beast that Maddie sees trailing her around town.

I don't think this is Clare B. Dunkle's best work. I enjoyed her Hollow Kingdom books much more. This is somewhat darker, and there's less humor. It reads a bit like a folktale, and of course it's somewhat folklore-y with its werewolves. It might have been more successful as either a longer or a shorter piece.

Willow says

****1/2

I loved this little werewolf book. Clare Dunkle has a wonderful way of evoking the dark past with her rich tales of ghosts, goblins and werewolves. *By These Ten Bones* made me think of a scary tale told by the campfire. Yet it's also so rich in atmosphere, describing the creepy, Scottish landscape. I could feel the misty fog and smell the smoky peat. In fact, the spookiness is the best part of the book, reminding me a little bit of *The Woman in Black*, yet much simpler to read. Not that I was truly frightened, but I was definitely on edge, racing through the pages to find out what happens.

Dunkle writes likable characters, introducing them with a flat voice, never really giving her opinion about anybody, letting the reader decide for themselves what they think (which I admired). Her characters fit the time and place too, with their own medieval and religious superstitions and their own outlook on life. I got to know the people of this tiny village, and even the bad characters had some redeemable traits.

If there was one thing I would have liked better though, it would be a clear description of the werewolf. Dunkle seemed to be purposely vague, making it seem that 'not seeing' the monster's true form is part of the spell.

I also wanted to see the hero and heroine kiss. Yes, I know they loved each other, but I wanted that extra romantic touch. After all, I'm a sucker for romance.

This is my favorite Clare Dunkle book by far, and is also one of my favorite werewolf books.

Lori {Romancing the Dark Side} says

Reviewed by Lori @ Romancing the Darkside:

<http://romancingthedarkside.blogspot....>

Not your usual young adult paranormal romance!

Set in the Highlands of Medieval Scotland, Maddie is the young daughter of weaver in a small village. She lives a quiet but happy life in her tight knit community and hopes to one day get married and start a family of her own. While out in the town one day, Maddie encounters a good looking young man who happens to be a very talented carver. Although their encounter is brief, Maddie finds the young man fascinating and can't wait to learn more about him.

Soon after, the young carver is brutally attacked by a savage beast that leaves him on the verge of death and the superstitious villagers terrorized. He's taken in by Maddie's family and while nursing him back to health Maddie gains the young man's trust and affection. It is here he reveals he can speak, his name is Paul and he has a dark and terrible secret he confides in Maddie. Realizing she has developed feelings for Paul, Maddie

is torn between following her heart or protecting her people.

This story is unlike anything I've read in young adult paranormal romance. The author creates such a vivid and spooky tale you'll feel like you're sharing scary stories at a campfire! The setting of Medieval Scotland is perfect for the supernatural aspect of the story, this was a time where people were highly superstitious so their reactions to the events is very believable. The characters lack a little development but the storytelling is superb, you'll see the story unfold right before your eyes as if you were there. Despite being such a young heroine, Maddie is very determined and wise. Her innocence in matters of the heart is also very endearing. Paul is a great mystery for most of the book but I love his resilience in dealing with his secret and how he is willing to protect Maddie at all costs. Their relationship is very sweet and touching.

This is a great read for anyone who wants to try something new in the werewolf genre. Filled with suspense, a little romance and a unique plot, *By These Ten Bones* reads more like an old folk tale with a surrounding theme that never goes out of style, love. I will surely be reading more of this author's work.

Misty says

I've read other things by Dunkle before (*The Hollow Kingdom*, *The House of Dead Maids*), and one of the things I really like about her is that she seems willing to confront the darker aspects, the things that make you uncomfortable. This is something I've come to associate with her, and I really do like it. But another thing I've come to associate with Dunkle is stories that come *so close* to making me feel the need to push them into everybody's hands, but not quite making it. This was true of *By These Ten Bones*. I think I wanted to love it more than I did, and I *wanted* to want to push it on everybody - but I didn't. This makes it sound like I didn't like it, or even that I was disappointed with it, neither of which is very accurate. I do want to push it on recommend it to some people, but not everybody. I just...it always felt like there was just some barrier we couldn't push through. The story and I were held back by *something*, something was missing and I don't know what it was. But I could *feel* it.

Alright, this is the weirdest analogy ever (maybe only topped by my soup vs. Soup analogy), but say you were eating your favorite ice cream sundae, and it's delicious; it has scoops of rich chocolate and fragrant vanilla ice cream topped off with nuts and cherries and sprinkles and whatever the hell else you put on it. And you like it, it's good - but something's missing, and you can't figure out what until you get to the last bite and you realize you forgot the damn caramel sauce. It's still a really good sundae, but you know how much better it can be with the little addition of that salty-sweet caramel, and now you're disappointed.

That's sort of how this is. Or maybe it's not like that at all. (I mean, it's a book, not a sundae. And why do all of my analogies have food?) But something about this book left me feeling incomplete, and it wasn't big enough to really stand out, but rather left me with that subtle nagging feeling that something that would put it over the top, something that would make me love it instead of like it, was missing. And I really don't know how else to explain it.

Part of me feels like maybe it was just a by-product of the style. It's very folkloric, very sparse in style and even in plot, pared back and bare bones. It's told very simply and somewhat slowly, too, and maybe *that's* what left me with that nagging feeling - maybe I wanted something more lyrical, or something I could connect to more, emotionally? Either way, the style does work for the story and does help build something really atmospheric and foreboding. There's a good sense of place and tension, and I worried for the

characters and how everything would turn out. I also feel like it's something I would read again, maybe even multiple times. But I don't think everyone will connect to it - I think it will be too spare, too simple, or too weird for some people to get past.

But for those who do, they'll find a really interesting tale of Otherness unlike most of the YA fare out there, and one that is worth their time. Even if there is an indefinable something missing...

Giedre says

3.5/5

Remember this: there's more than one kind of strength.

A YA fairytale that takes an interesting look at monsters, human nature and how the two intersect. It's set in medieval Scotland, but the world of the novel is not a particularly expanded one, which diminished my enjoyment of the book some. Though, overall, I had a really fun time reading this. It's a really good read-in-one-sitting book.

Rebecca says

Maddie lives in a small town in the Scottish Highlands during the Middle Ages. It is very rare for strangers to visit the town; a couple of times a year, traveling merchants might come by with their wares. One such group of travelers includes a mysterious young man who is extremely talented at woodcarving. Maddie is immediately drawn to the stranger, and he to her. But then strange things begin to happen in the village. The young carver is attacked, and Maddie thinks she saw and heard the monster who did it. Living in a time when most people were superstitious, she readily accepts that some evil creature is responsible.

As the young man recovers in her home, he and Maddie become close. She is the only one he will really talk to. She learns his name is Paul, and she also learns the dark secret he carries. Realizing that she has fallen in love with Paul, Maddie must decide how much she is willing to giving up in order to help him without putting her town and everyone else she loves at risk.

By These Ten Bones is a very original novel compared to most werewolf romances. It was set in Medieval times when most people were still superstitious and believed in the supernatural and the forces of evil. For that reason I thought that the plot and characters were a lot more believable than in most paranormal romances that are set in modern times. This book is written more like a folk tale, and so there isn't as much character development, but the setting really came alive, it was quite spooky at times! The descriptions of the Scottish Highlands were very detailed and I was not surprised to find out the author visited there before writing this book. If you are looking for something to read that is different from the usual young adult paranormal romance, I would recommend this book.

Disclosure: Review copy provided by publisher.

Mundie Moms & Mundie Kids says

3.5 stars

When a mysterious mute, wood carver visits Maddie's village, she can't help but be drawn to him. Getting his attention is going to be harder than Maddie realizes. After her village has given up on him and deemed him an idiot, Maddie can't help herself and she wants to know more about him. Not one for words, this piercing green eyed, angst stranger isn't willing to give away his secrets. After a turn of events and an attack from an evil shadow like creature, Carver, as Maddie calls him, ends up being taken care of by her mother. During his recovery Carver begins to slowly open up to Maddie about what he is, and the danger she and her village are in.

Maddie and Carver aren't in-depth characters, but with the story reading more like a folklore, I felt I got to know them enough to understand them and the choices they make. Both are similar, as both are like outsiders to those around them. Maddie is one of the few younger people who live in small remote village and Carver has a dark secret that keeps him from getting close to anyone. It wasn't hard to see why these two felt drawn to each other. I liked seeing how the two of them became closer and learned to trust each other. I also like that the werewolf isn't like traditional wolves, but is more of a shadow creature that lurks in the darkest places of the night during the full moon, which makes this creature dark and eerie.

What I enjoyed most about Clare Dunkle's *These Ten Books* is the unique werewolf mythology and its beautiful setting. Set in medieval Scotland among its highlands gives an air of mystery and intrigue to the book. Truthfully, the setting and lore are what made me want to read the book, and kept my interest throughout the story. These key elements play just as big of a role in the story as the characters do, and really set the tone for the book.

I enjoyed this fascinating spin on werewolf mythology and I recommend picking it up. It's a good read.

Hannah says

Wonderfully atmospheric YA story. Good writing that set the mood of medieval Scotland, with descriptions that were well drawn and evocative. Our heroine Maddie was a type I particularly like (especially in a YA novel): not particularly beautiful or a "super-speschul snowflake"; often anxious and filled with doubts about what she could do - but in the end she finds her confidence and proves her worth.

Although there are some semi-graphic descriptions of bloody maulings and werewolves, otherwise the book is a clean read for young readers, with no profanity or sexual situations (hmmph, not even the tiniest kiss at the end...)

Buddy read with Jeannette (sorry I flew through it!!)

Marisa says

This is the third book I've read by Clare B. Dunkle, and I've really enjoyed them all. What's more, they've all been really, incredibly different books. *The Sky Inside* is a dystopian future sci-fi about a boy who leaves his domed world to find the truth. *The House of Dead Maids* is a seriously freaky prequel to *Wuthering Heights* that explains how Heathcliff is adopted by Catherine's dad. And this book is a werewolf-ish (he's like no other werewolf I've read about) romance-ish story set in probably 15th or 16th century Scotland. Wa-huh? How does one author write all these books and succeed in all of them?

I really like her female protagonists in *House of Dead Maids* and *By These Ten Bones* -- honest but not naive, hard working but not power hungry, and generally clever, good girls. I didn't mark any quotes, I think I was reading too fast for that. :)

Jade Klinger says

Our main character Maddie is an older teenage girl living in a small village located in Scotland. A beautiful girl in a beautiful country. Maddie lives her life as the weaver's daughter, cleaning, cooking, and spinning yarn, while also taking care of an old village woman named Lady Mary. All until one day two travelers visit her village, and the young traveler around her age catches her eye. He's tall, with some muscle but, weak with shiny black raven hair. Although he's not normal, never talks, eyes only on his wood carvings.

Maddie soon seeks out a way to make him talk. She's deeply curious about this young wood carver. She's attracted to him and can't get the idea of him out of her head. Then one day everything changes. Late at night on a full moon something screams a painful scream. It lurks outside, ready to kill. Everyone in the village senses it, ready to defend themselves. In the end it never hurt anyone except the young traveler.

Maddie and her family take the young carver in to clean all of his deep wounds. High with a fever the carver looks like he's about to die. Maddie has faith that the man she loves will survive. In the end he heals from being ill and finally starts talking to Maddie. He's still closed off but she still learns some things about him. Like learning he's been a carver since he was 6, learning that his name is Paul. While also wishing she didn't have any knowledge of his terrible secret.

Maddie soon searches for a cure, running to Lady Mary who has more knowledge of dark creatures hoping that she could help Paul. Lady Mary is a woman of many talents. Making potions for the sick people of the village, and taking care of them. She's soon accused of being a black magic witch for having a Werewolf book in her possession. And get's thrown out of the village.

With no hope from Lady Mary, Maddie is running out of time. The full moon is getting closer and Maddie knows that Paul is getting antsy about changing. Caught in the middle Maddie must decide what matters most to her, and what price she's willing to pay to keep it.

I thought this book was quite good and interesting! The setting the novel felt like it was around the medieval

times in Scotland, which I really loved since I'm addicted to that time of history and the beauty of the location. Throughout the novel there's a lot of broken up English, which I like because it makes the novel extremely authentic. It gives off a feeling like you've been teleported back in time. But I also dislike it too because I don't enjoy reading broken English. Luckily it wasn't throughout the entire book!

Also since the setting was in medieval times there were many religious aspects in the novel. If I'm totally fine with that. But I felt like every other page had something about being holy or about the devil. And to be honest that part of the book was quite annoying.

But I really loved the idea of the story and the fact that it was about werewolves. The overall romance of the book was very cute, I loved how Paul and Maddie acted around each other. I just wish that there was more of it, I never really felt that their romance was strong enough to actually make it romantic. Maybe it's just me being a hopeless romantic? The ending in the book had a great twist to it and I loved it, although it never felt fully finished. I just would really like to know what happens with Paul's and Maddie's relationship.

I enjoyed this novel a lot, it was a quick chilling read that kept me on my toes. I hope that the author writes a sequel to *By These Ten Bones*. I'd like to see what happens next!

Torzilla says

BY THESE TEN BONES (BTTB) was an enjoyable read, though I admit that I had a few issues with the novel. If anything, it has more to do with the manuscript's age and what was accepted by agents and publishers back then. But first, let's focus on the good, shall we?

Clare knows how to make generally likable, strong heroines. She also knows how to weave an interesting plot and write vividly beautiful descriptions. I think that these two elements alone encouraged me to continue reading this novel.

This is a historical paranormal book. It is based in Scotland, and is about a werewolf curse. I thought that, while most authors focus on present day, this was an excellent way to incorporate two interesting features and making it unique.

There were two issues I had with the book: the POV, and all the descriptions. The POV, third person omni, did not specifically follow Maddie; instead, I felt more like a ghost following each character around. On one hand, this kept the story flowing constantly, but on the other, I did not connect fully with Maddie and Paul until much later in the story.

As for the descriptions, I've gotten used to reading lots of debuts which avoid full descriptions. It has been encouraged for writers to provide the bare minimum so readers can use their imaginations to fill in the blank. When I read page after page which describes this and that, I tend to skim because I don't care about all that information now. That happened to me when I was younger too, while reading the *Harry Potter* books.

While those two complaints are somewhat hefty ones, regarding a reader's experience, I do not believe they will ultimately ruin the book for most. If a person reads BTTB first, and finds he/she does not enjoy it, I hope he/she will not automatically dismiss Clare as an author. Her more recent works were extremely enjoyable for me, and I think they will be for most readers too.

Kathleen says

For romance, 3 stars. For horror, 5 stars. This is a spine-chilling romance for young adults, set in the highlands of Scotland in the Middle Ages. It's told in third person:

"Your shadow," Maddie stammered, pointing to the ground behind him. "It moved. Moved by itself. I saw it."

In this book, werewolves are malevolent shadowy parasites that manifest into something even more dreadful under a full moon. Not sexy. Some of the superstitious villagers are also malevolent (at times), lending historical authenticity.

By These Ten Bones is certainly a horror story, but also a romance -- albeit a "clean" one. A relationship develops between an unwilling werewolf (Paul, a traveling wood carver) and a local villager, Maddie. Paul forms a bond with Maddie quickly, and will only talk to her, allowing other villagers to (initially) think him "touched" or at least mute. In the end, they are willing to die for each other, even though Maddie freaks when she first discovers Paul's parasitic alter ego:

"You spineless slug, you mound of mud, come *here!*" he shrieked.

Maddie blinked. A black shadow seemed to lie across his face. His eyes gleamed out through it, brilliantly green. She stooped and lifted the lantern to shine it full on him, but the shadow on his face didn't move.

"*Blood,*" purred the shadow in a thick voice. "*Salty, sweaty blood.*"

Maddie is courageous, yet not reckless. She wrestles with her fears and with her conscience, turning often to Father Mac for help. She wants to do right by others, but is sometimes unable to influence her stubborn, wrongheaded Scottish clansmen (thinking of Lady Mary and Ned the Traveler). She tries to find an easier, less painful solution to various problems, but does what must, and heeds the "second sight" she inherited from Grandmother.

Dunkle contrasts scripture with superstitions about birth defects, witchcraft, the Loch Ness Monster / The Water Horse, etc. She portrays the local priest, Father Mac, in a benign light, and features a small role for angels, especially one archangel. Having read Dunkle's wonderful YA fantasy, *The Hollow Kingdom*, I was surprised at the strong Catholic basis for this book, but it fit the plot and the setting beautifully.

The secondary characters are layered and interesting. None of them are cardboard cut-outs. Even the dreadful Black Ewan is not totally loathsome. Neither is Ned, Paul's sotted "keeper" of sorts. Lady Mary is an educated, lonely, and somewhat self-centered healer, an ultimately sympathetic figure with an interesting past. Kudos to Dunkle for creating textured characters, including the giant, Old Angus.

Father Mac, the priest, and Fair Sarah, Maddie's mother, are the most lovable secondary characters. With so many gothic goings-on, I needed their upbeat contributions.

Descriptive and fast-paced, with an abrupt ending. I wanted an epilogue.

Yejoon Kim says

I love the book! I mean, seriously! It's great!

The plot, the twist, the love story... everything is great and well-written! When I finished reading the book, I was like... "That's it? I want more!"

I also found the characters that I despised at first, turned out to be really good natured people.

The only thing that I think the story lacked was a little more of romance. I mean, I'd really like to read a scene where the two of them would kiss... even at the ending, that would be fine. I just want to see them do that. Hehe. But, even without them physically showing their affection, we could still see that they love each other just by their actions, and that made me like this more.

Kyleigh says

When I first saw this book I was pulled in by the cover. It was so dark and the way the woman's head is thrown back in ecstasy was just gripping. I immediately picked it up, read the synopsis, decided I HAD to have it, and promptly bought it. I am so glad I did. It has to be the best paranormal related book I have read since Sunshine by Robin McKinley. I immediately fell in love. I'd even go as far as to say that this is my favorite werewolf book, hands down.

This book was rich with historical content. From what I gathered this either takes place in Ireland or Scotland. The disdain towards Englishmen and reference to "the continent" leads me to think this takes place somewhere in the British Isles. The author didn't spell it out, rather she let us envision our own primitive world where monsters stalk the night. Dunkle weaves a world full of evil spirits and old superstitions that will leave you afraid of the dark. The author does a fantastic job of making you feel like you've been transported back in time. The practices of the villagers, their lives, their beliefs, was all wonderfully written and full of true understanding. She didn't just decide to set her story back in post Anglo-Saxon England. You can tell that a lot of research and true knowledge went into writing this book. I loved the book all the more for it.

Maddie is the daughter of the village weaver. She lives a simple life and is content with it. When Travelers come to her village she is immediately drawn to the silent forlorn young man who accompanies them. An extremely talented carver, the young man and his companion sell his wares to the villagers. He speaks to no one and is content to carve his pieces in solitude. However, Maddie can't help be fascinated by his brilliant green eyes. When his drunken companion gets himself locked up and forced to help bring in the villages harvest, he finds himself with no where else to go. On the night of the full moon Maddie hears a creature outside her door. In the morning the young carver is found by the loch, mauled by a great beast. Maddie's family takes him in and helps him recover. He gradually starts to open up and talk to Maddie. But the boy has his own secrets he is unwilling to tell. The boy with no name is afraid to make friends, to share his past, and to fall in love. A great fear haunts him that he will hurt the ones he cares for, and the looming threat of the full moon doesn't go away.

This story was truly beautifully told. The growing bond between Maddie and Carver (as the villagers come to call him) was wonderfully done. Their relationship is built on trust, not lust. They confide in each other, and Maddie is there for Carver when no one else is. Her loyalty and her determination to stay by Carver, no matter what happens and what he turns into, is truly inspiring. They truly love each other and Carver is

determined to keep her safe from harm, even if that means keeping her away from him. Maddie is willing to sacrifice everything for Carver in order to keep her village safe and give Carver a life free from fear. What was really surprising for me was that they didn't even have a physical relationship. Nothing happened beyond holding hands. That just made it all the more perfect in my eyes. Of course I wanted SOMETHING to happen, but in the end it was fine without. The two of them don't need to share an intimate relationship to show that they'd do anything for each other.

Maddie's complete willingness to face evil itself in order to save the man she loves truly sets her apart from other heroines. Other YA werewolf books simply don't compare. The depth of true love, and the true horror of the beast that Carver turns into is nothing like the watered down version of werewolves that is rampant throughout most novels these days. Werewolves are terrifying beasts that will kill anything in their path and tear them apart limb from limb. I loved the more classic take on werewolves. It was reminiscent of *The Wolfman* and *An American Werewolf in London*. You just can't beat the classics.

If you couldn't tell, I absolutely loved this book. I can't even fully express how awesome it was. In comparison to other YA werewolf books out there, *By These Ten Bones* blows them all out of the water. It was fabulous, plain and simple. It might not be to some people's tastes. If you're looking for a wild paranormal romance, you're not going to get it. However, if you're looking for a story with both true love and a terrifying portrayal of what goes bump in the night you'll definitely get it. Loved it.
