



Scents and Sensibility

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When a mysterious case of illegal cactus smuggling comes to their attention, Chet and his human P.I. companion, Bernie Little, find themselves in a prickly situation in this eighth book in the *New York Times* bestselling mystery series.

In the latest entry in the immensely popular Chet and Bernie mystery series, Private Investigator Bernie Little and his canine companion Chet return home to encounter some alarming developments. First off, Bernie's wall safe normally hidden behind the waterfall picture in the office is gone, and with it Bernie's grandfather's watch, their most valuable possession. And next door, old Mr. Parsons is under investigation for being in possession of a saguaro cactus illegally transplanted from the desert. Bernie and Chet go deep into the desert to investigate. Is it possible that such a lovely old couple have a terrible secret in their past?

Chet and Bernie discover bad things going on in the wilderness, far worse than cactus smuggling, and all connected to a strange but innocent-seeming desert festival called Arrow Bright. They unearth leads that take them back to a long-ago kidnapping that may not have been a kidnapping and threaten a ruthless and charismatic criminal with a cult following, a criminal who sees at once what Chet and Bernie mean to each other and knows how to exploit it.

Every bit as insightful (*Booklist*), humorous (*Library Journal*), and deliciously addictive (*Publishers Weekly*, starred review) as Quinn's previous books, *Scents and Sensibility* is a drool-worthy mystery that will have readers everywhere begging for more.

Scents and Sensibility Details

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Author : Spencer Quinn

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From Reader Review Scents and Sensibility for online ebook

Linda Rowland says

For some reason this one took longer to hook me. Love Chet as much as ever.

Sheila Beaumont says

Another fun detective tale with P.I. Bernie Little and his canine sidekick, Chet. But what an ending! When is the next book coming out?

Debbie says

I love these books. A friend of mine told me about them about a year ago and how good they were. I was like "a dog narrating a story? Meh". Then I requested one just to check it out. My friend was right. I've only read two of these books, this one being better than the last one. I think it's because the dog did more narrating in this one. The dog just cracks me up and you know you can just see him doing the things he says.

He's always looking for that chance to grab the pant legs of the perp, LOL. I am curious though, is Chet and Bernie going to London? Guess I will find out in the next one.

Thanks Atria and Net Galley for the opportunity and entertainment in exchange for an honest review. I thoroughly enjoyed it and highly recommend it!!

Ms.pegasus says

Who would've thought.... People actually try to steal those stately saguaro cacti in order to landscape their homes. It is therefore illegal to go digging them up in Arizona without a permit from the Arizona Dept. of Agriculture. I guess I shouldn't be surprised. In Chicago my parents came out of their house one day and found a hole where their big blossoming peony plant used to be. Cactus theft is where this 8th book in the Chet and Bernie Mystery series begins. Their aged neighbors, the Parsons, have received the dubious "gift" of a saguaro from their miscreant son Billy, newly released from serving a 15 year prison sentence for kidnapping. Several crimes are interlocked. Bernie arrives home to find that his wall safe containing his grandfather's watch has been broken into. A state investigator from the department of agriculture is found murdered. Her puppy, a canine with an uncanny appearance and scent similar to Chet's, has disappeared. The case file on Billy's arrest for the kidnapping have been "lost." There is a curious evasiveness among the principals when Bernie begins to ask questions about that kidnapping.

Of course, it is always fun to listen to these cases told from Chet's point of view. His loyalty and trust in Bernie are complete. His enthusiasm for helping Bernie, sole owner and employee of the Little Detective Agency, catch perps is without bounds. He is, however, constantly amazed at the dullness of human senses. Here's an exchange occurring while the pair are on stakeout: "*'Chet? Something up?' Most definitely. A motorcycle was roaring toward us down the mountain. Bernie really didn't hear it? I couldn't believe —*

...*'Sounds more like a motorcycle than a car,' Bernie said, his voice low. That had to be one of Bernie's jokes, since the bike was practically right on us.*" Chet constantly reminds himself to make mental notes, whatever those might be, of the random questions Bernie poses out loud.

This book, however, fell a bit short of other books in the series. The tangle of interlocked cases detracted from the urgency of their investigation. There were fewer humorous encounters with the other animals that normally populate this series. Readers of this book will enjoy the familiar threads: Chet's perplexity at encountering that strangely familiar puppy, Bernie's relationship with Suzie who is having a successful career with the Washington Post, Chet's concern over their sputtering cash flow, the outrageously dreadful ex-wife Leda, the big-hearted son Charlie's bond with Bert and Chet, and of course, Chet's unique take on human behavior. It is a bridge between what we already know about the pair and anticipation of their next adventure. I love to return to this series to revitalize my cheerful mood. Despite its flaws, this book did the trick.

NOTES:

Saguaro cactus note from the Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
<http://cronkitezine.asu.edu/spring201...>

Willa says

I think this was the best Chet and Bernie mystery to date. The books are narrated by Chet, a dog, in a stream-of-consciousness style that is very engaging. Bernie Little, the "Little" of the Little Detective Agency, is divorced, war-wounded, and troubled. Subplots involving an on-again, off-again girlfriend, Bernie's son Charlie, his ex-wife and her current husband, and Bernie's elderly neighbors add atmosphere to the book, but pale in comparison to Chet's narration. Chet is motivated by his love for Bernie and his love for food; in this book he seemed to have a lot more thoughts that he was unable to convey to Bernie.

Chet and Bernie come home one day to find that someone has been in their house, and Bernie's father's watch, his most valuable possession, has been stolen. The watch seems to spend as much time in the pawn shop as it does in Bernie's safe, but now the watch, as well as the safe, are missing. Bernie's investigation leads him to his neighbor's house where a stolen saguaro cactus has turned up, along with an investigator and what appears to be (maybe?) the result of an assignation of Chet's in an earlier book.

There is a decades-old crime that may or may not have been a kidnapping, prisoners released from prison, elderly neighbors in need of help, and a desert festival reminiscent of Burning Man. An altogether wonderful book, a great mystery, and a superb entry into the Chet and Bernie saga.

I received this book from NetGalley in return for an honest review.

Erin L says

I love this series, but this book is not my favorite. I thought it was a little disjointed, which is too bad because I handed it to my Mom to read as an introduction to the series before I read it. Ooops. No wonder she wasn't all that enthusiastic about it.

I liked it because I happen to love Chet so I give him a bit of a break, but it's not his best work ;)

I'll still be looking for the next in the series.

Kathy says

I have loved these books from the start. This is the 8th in the series, as usual narrated by Chet the dog. In this book, he and Bernie solve a 15 year old kidnapping mystery, and discover who is stealing Saguaro cacti out of the desert, which is illegal. We also see more of Chet's son, Shooter. I don't know if he will be a future character or not, but he's fun and Chet's reactions to him are hilarious.

Rebecca says

I enjoyed this, but it took a while for me to get interested in it. The dog narrator threw me off a bit, and I was partway through before I started enjoying it. I'll pick up the other books in the series if I can find them cheap enough, or at the library.

I got this book from Netgalley in exchange for a review.

Christine says

Happy to be home after their long road trip, Bernie and Chet are looking forward to some down time. Chet, as usual whenever he reenters the house begins his sniff and search – just to make sure everything is at it should be. Bernie is a little confused when Chet begins clawing at the wall in his office, until further investigation shows his wall safe has been removed, and with it, his prized possession – his grandfather's pocket watch. Just as he begins to try to unravel that puzzle their elderly neighbour, Mr. Parson's is outside and quite agitated because he is being investigated for illegal possession of the Saguaro cactus which has been transplanted into his front yard. Strange as it may seem the two incidents turn out to be related.

Looking into the case pro-bono (which always worries Chet because of "their finances") they discover it all stems back to a suspicious kidnapping case that happened many years ago.

Not only that, but the reader is FINALLY given the answers to what happened on that no-so-long-ago night that Chet leapt the gate and had an unexpected tryst.

Once again Chet does a fine job of not only helping to solve the mystery but also in narrating the adventure from his canine point of view. In my humble opinion this is the best entry yet in Mr. Quinn's series.

One small paragraph in the book made me once again appreciate Chet's simple view of problem solving and had me thinking that maybe people could take a page out of Chet's book ...

"Bernie looked over at me in surprise. "Growling?" he said. "What's that about? You mad at me?"
Whoa! Mad at Bernie? What could that possibly mean? I was mad because ... because ... nothing came to mind. Meaning I was mad at nothing, which had to mean I wasn't mad. There! All better. I rested my paw on Bernie's leg, just to let him know we were cool."

Kay Hudson says

I love Chet, and he's as funny and doggy as ever in this installment. And Shooter, Chet's mini-me (relationship obvious to everyone but Chet) is darling. But I have to admit I was taken aback by the unexpected cliffhanger ending, not the norm for this series. I suppose we'll have to wait until next summer for the resolution, but there IS a short story scheduled for November, and I've already pre-ordered it.

Pamela says

For the most part, I typically don't barrel through a book. I'd much rather savor each one - a nibble here, a nibble there. But OH NO!!! Not when it comes to "Chet the Jet" - K-9 extraordinaire. And especially not with this latest Chet and Bernie installment: Scents and Sensibility.

"Engine on, lights off - our usual technique in situations like this - we waited, both of us hunched forward, eyes on the road . . . Look out world!"

Chet as a narrator, is a hoot!! You just can't help but chortle and chuckle at some of the things he ponders over. Everything from collaring perps one pant leg at a time to the delightful wonders of pilfering lint-encrusted Cheetos from judicial pant-cuffs.

The last couple books were lacking a bit of the original quirky-dynamics and cheeky humor. Not this time, "Amigo!" Chet was on top of his game, narrating one heck of a great tail-wagging tale. This "prickly" case is filled with wit-and-wag, mayhem and mystery, and sagacious suspense.

Sure, it's not brainiac lit. But not everything need be somber and stoic. What it is, at least to me, is, pure unadulterated enjoyment. FUN FUN FUN!!! Tail-wagging, five-star fun.

AliceAnn says

That ending. YIKES! I need the next book ASAP!

Betsy says

I am completely hooked and, puh-leez Mr. Quinn don't leave us hanging for long!

This is one of my favorites of the series -- Chet and Bernie are back home in Arizona, with saguaro cacti looming large, Chet is at the top of his form, and we learn a great deal about that mysterious puppy.

Christine says

This series has been so much fun, and this latest book was no disappointment. Right now, though, I'm too busy reeling from the cliffhanger ending to write a proper review!

Thelma says

Most powerful Bernie and Chet story yet. I devoured it and am looking for more (a bit of a cliffhanger at the end). Chet is at his best and so is Bernie, the most doggedly determined and stubbornly loyal pair in all of sluthdom (if that's a place). For fans, this pair cannot be beat.
