



Bad Weeds Never Die: A John Santana Novel, Christopher Valen, Conquill Press, 2011, 0980001730, 9780980001730, 370 pages. "Forced to flee Colombia at the age of sixteen and haunted by guilt for leaving his younger sister Natalia behind, Homicide Detective John Santana is a man on a mission. When a blood spattered Mercedes belonging to the daughter of a prominent psychologist is found abandoned, there are few clues to her whereabouts but a million dollars' worth of reasons why someone might want her dead. Confronted with a list of suspects--a philandering boyfriend with a checkered past, the victim's estranged sister who has a penchant for mysteries and drugs, an angry man whose adopted Colombian son committed suicide, and a shady lawyer who can't be trusted--Santana's search for answers leads him to the photo of a mysterious woman who may hold the key to solving the crime. But to find her he must return to Colombia and face the ghosts of his past, and the man who has vowed to kill him."--P. [4] of cover..

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". . . Bad Weeds Never Die, the third of the John Santana novels, delivered on all fronts. Once again I enjoyed Mr. Valen's well-plotted and intriguing mystery for all the obvious reasons: flowing and well paced storyline, great dialogue, multi-layered and vivid characters, a great sense of place and time, relevant issues and believable events . . ." (Read full review)

". . . This is the first of Valen's books that I have read in the John Santana series and surely will not be the last . . . Valen's novel is gripping, fast-paced and will have you guessing until the end. The characters are intriguing and there are many plot twists and turns. It is a true page turner in every sense of the word . . ." (Read full review)

". . . The latest John Santana police procedural is an excellent investigative thriller as the two detectives methodically work a case that spins out of control with homicides. Readers will enjoy accompanying Santana and Hawkins as they follow twisted leads in Minnesota while John learns you can't go home in world filled with violent predators."

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Christopher Valen's writing just keeps getting better! Of his three books, this one is the best. It's plotted more tightly and has a wonderful balance between action, internal thoughts of the main character, and sensory perceptions that make the reader feel the scene intensely. Like a lot of Latin literature and culture, surrealism and dreams form a big part. Valen's Latin character, John Santana, has many dreams and images in his life that give us a good sense of who he is and the culture/background from where he comes. Read it!!

This is a can't put down crime/ police thriller. John Santana is a good cop, carrying some baggage, not perfect but a likeable character. Christopher Valen has really gotten this right! I just finished Book 3 and can't wait to start 4. Great series for those that like a great plot, unexpected twists, thrillers and mysteries. As a bonus for me, I lived in St. Paul for many years, so I enjoyed a few visual reminders of certain landmarks and places I have visited.

I really enjoyed Christopher Valen's book about John Santana. Our book club chose *Bad Weeds Never Die* because we meet at Neumann's, one of the bars in the book. When Christopher said he would be a guest at our book club, we were all so excited! Chris spent the evening with us, explaining about police procedurals, talking with us about the book, and entertaining us with his stories. It was the best book club ever! I now own all of his Santana novels, and am looking forward to his upcoming endeavors. I highly recommend inviting him to your book club. Thank you, Chris!

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