

# A morbid taste for bones by ellis peters

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A Morbid Taste for Bones by Ellis Peters has an unusual plot. It describes the story of a monk detective, Cadfael, who is a Benedictine monk at the Shrewbury Abbey at Shrewbury.

A monk of the monastery, Brother Columbanus becomes prone to various hallucinations that compel him to think that he has come across St. Winifred (who was a Welsh girl in her mundane life and was elevated to the level of sainthood after being executed by a malevolent feudal.

His assertion about the unhappiness due to indifferent attitude of the local Welsh people and wish for reposition compels the monastery's head to set an expedition to bring the relics of the saint.

As Cadfael is a master of all trades and a Welsh native, so he is chosen by the monastic authorities for this excursion. The whole story revolves around his efforts for the acquisition of bones from a village in Wales.

Peters set the story in the historical perspective of 12th century and correlates the socio-cultural, political and economic milieu of the contemporary era with the major thematic expression of the story. The movement of the plot takes place against the background of civil war between King Stephen and Empress Maud.

Peters clearly illustrates the effect of this power struggle for the throne on the common folks of England and Wales. Peters does not directly refer to this struggle but characters converse the course of this event and its effect on them.

It further manifests the political power that Church holds in the lives of the people and how they ploy to augment and expand their power. Time and

again, it is illustrated that acquisition of relics is not to honor the plea of the saint but it is motivated by Prior Robert's craving to consolidate his political power.

It further refers to rivalry and hatred between Welsh, Normans as well as Saxons and also highlights Crusades in its historical perspective. This book beautifully unifies the original plot with the contemporary history in a way that does not seem inappropriate.

#### References

Ellis, Peters. (1979). *Morbid Taste for Bones: The First Chronicle of Brother Cadfael*.