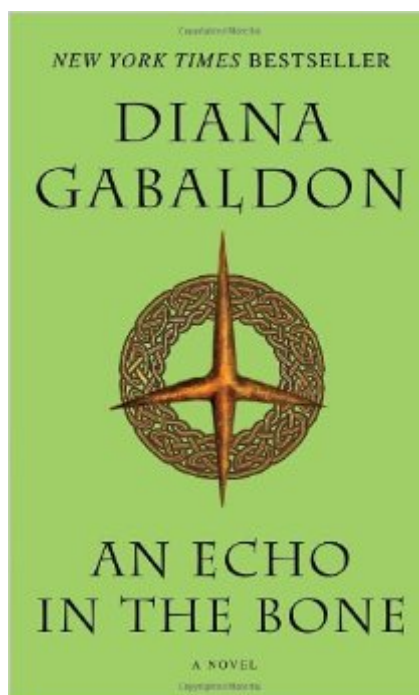


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An Echo In The Bone: A Novel (Outlander)



Synopsis

Diana Gabaldon's brilliant storytelling has captivated millions of readers in her bestselling and award-winning Outlander saga. In *An Echo in the Bone*, the seventh volume, Gabaldon continues the extraordinary story of the eighteenth-century Scotsman Jamie Fraser and his twentieth-century time-traveling wife, Claire Randall. Jamie Fraser, former Jacobite and reluctant rebel, is already certain of three things about the American rebellion: The Americans will win, fighting on the side of victory is no guarantee of survival, and he'd rather die than have to face his illegitimate son—a young lieutenant in the British army—across the barrel of a gun. Claire Randall knows that the Americans will win, too, but not what the ultimate price may be. That price won't include Jamie's life or his happiness, though—not if she has anything to say about it. Meanwhile, in the relative safety of the twentieth century, Jamie and Claire's daughter, Brianna, and her husband, Roger MacKenzie, have resettled in a historic Scottish home where, across a chasm of two centuries, the unfolding drama of Brianna's parents' story comes to life through Claire's letters. The fragile pages reveal Claire's love for battle-scarred Jamie Fraser and their flight from North Carolina to the high seas, where they encounter privateers and ocean battles—as Brianna and Roger search for clues not only to Claire's fate but to their own. Because the future of the MacKenzie family in the Highlands is mysteriously, irrevocably, and intimately entwined with life and death in war-torn colonial America. With stunning cameos of historical characters from Benedict Arnold to Benjamin Franklin, *An Echo in the Bone* is a soaring masterpiece of imagination, insight, character, and adventure—a novel that echoes in the mind long after the last page is turned. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

OMG! I just got to the end of the book... I can't say I finished the book, I'll just say that I got to the end of it. Loose ends are loose ends, but Diana.... what is this about? I read this on my e-reader and I kept paging back and forth, trying to find the rest of it, thinking, "This can't be over. There's no ending!" It leaves far too many characters hanging with life or death situations, far too many conversations in mid-sentence. It's worse than a soap opera! And let's talk continuity, here. Does she even have an editor? At the end of the last book, Jamie stood with John Grey, watching Brianna and William in the street. In this book, Jamie claims not to have set eyes on William since he was 12. There are about a half a dozen major continuity conflicts in this story that would have been really easy to fix, if anyone was paying attention. Now I love Diana's characters and her writing and I get so wrapped up in her stories that it threatens the rest of my ability to function in life, but this ended so strangely that I'll be jarred and marred for days! I enjoyed reading this book and I'll buy her next one, but I recommend that no one read this one until the next one is available. Leaving us hanging here, for possibly years until the next one comes out, is too upsetting. SPOILER ALERT: THERE ARE SPOILERS IN THE COMMENTS

I never in a million years thought I'd give DG less than five stars. She's one of three authors on my release-date auto-buy, and I've been eagerly awaiting this book for years. But having spent the last couple of weeks reading it, I really don't even know what to say (I know I should take that back - I ALWAYS have something to say and I'm about to say it). Problem one: It took me several weeks to read. I'm a compulsive reader. I can't sleep with a story unfinished, and yet Echo never grabbed me. I went several days without evening picking it up because I didn't feel like it. I never felt emotionally engaged. A good lot of the time, I just didn't care what was happening. And even worse, I felt bored by the story. Problem two: The book is so physically big that it hurt to read. And I mean that literally. I had shoulder and elbow pain from holding it up. It really, really needed to be cut. There was a point where I wished DG had cut out the last 150 pages and replaced them with "Six months later." There was just too much of mundane life and while beautifully written, it had no presence, no force, no suspense. The book overall needed more focus on story and less on how to fix a collapsed lung using nothing but tar and a bird feather. Many of the elements got lots of story didn't end up leading anywhere (such as Ian & the two orphan girls. I expected them to show up again.) Problem three:

Timing. The book is really three different stories. Jamie & Claire in 1777 America (mostly), William (Wee Willie) Ramsome in about the same time period, and Bree & Roger in 1980's Scotland. But the timelines didn't happen evenly and so I was often rather confused. For example: William is leaving to go find Dr. Hunter in the rebel camp. Then we switch to Jamie/Claire and cover 7-8-9 months time in a hundred or more pages. Then we go back to William who has found the doctor a day or so later. This went on throughout the book, and made me crazy. Since one of the main foreshadows of the book is that Jamie & William would meet again, I could never tell if they were even in the same time / same place.

Problem four: Pacing. The book has more of an episodic plot rather than linear. It unfolds around smaller incidents that contribute to a greater whole. Many of the smaller incidents involve the William, Lord Grey, and the battles of the American Revolution, Jamie & Claire trying to make it to Scotland, Roger and Bree making a life in more modern Lallybroch. Things move slowly, but beautifully. I have learned to expect that from DG, and she is so good at it that I enjoy the details and the history and the true-to-life characters (knowing that she is as historically accurate as possible). But in this book it was way TOO slow. And the last couple hundred pages (the ending?) were just strange. First things slow down so much that pages and pages are devoted to reminiscing and revisiting the past and death and... (well I can't tell you everything!) Then it switches so that the story & people move so fast I can't keep up. And the turn-about surprises are SO surprising that I have a hard time believing them. I'm left with a feeling of 'where did that come from?' and 'why did that happen?' and 'you've got to be kidding me!' The end was hugely dissatisfying, and yet that was (to me) where the real story was. The good stuff was glossed over. So while DG is still one of the masters of the written word and I will probably fork out another \$30 for her next book, I overall am rather disappointed. I feel like she is more interested in showing all the neat historical details she has learned than in telling a story. She has lost the story. And that makes me so sad because I have spent something like 16 or 17 years following these characters and being invested in their final outcome (we all know it comes back to that ghost watching Claire brush her hair). Please DG, go back to telling us their story rather than showing us what it was like to live in the eighteenth century.

I know there are rabid Gabaldon fans out there who would gladly read her shopping lists and give them rave reviews, but I just can't be one of them for this book. I've been reading this series since the beginning. I've been involved in the online message boards, raved to friends and strangers alike about them, but it's Jamie and Claire's story I am interested in. This book is, what, 1/4 Jamie and Claire? I haven't read the Lord John books, and am not interested in them at all. I want to know the

rest of the Fraser's story, and am really pretty sick of being strung along while we wait for Lord John books, companion books, picture books..The story is choppy and difficult to stick with. The events toward the end of the book show Claire so out of character I found myself rolling my eyes and wondering what the heck was going on. The ending..gah. I'm all for having some suspense for the next book, but this was just nuts. I'm not the only one who was wondering if the printer messed up and cut off a chapter. It was like that jolt at the end of a movie that ends badly, the kind that has you looking at your date going "um..okay?"We're not reading a story that comes full circle, just an ongoing soap opera that more and more things get added to. We're literally going on 20 years of this. Wrap it up already. Many of your die hard fans are flat out losing interest.

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