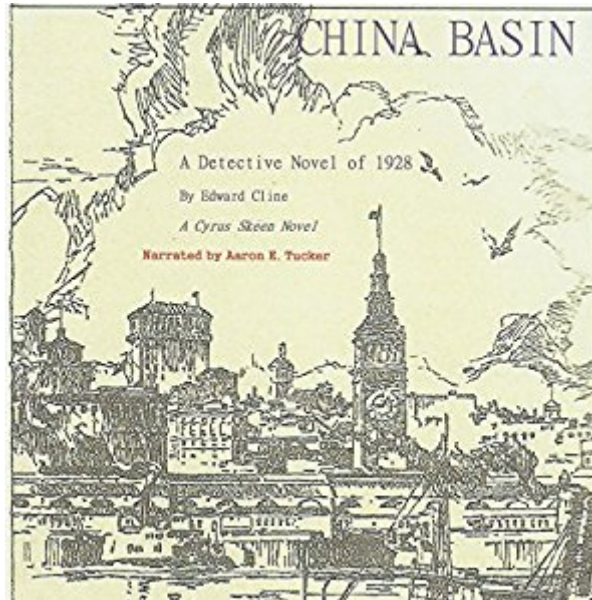




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China Basin: The Cyrus Skeen Series



Synopsis

Cyrus Skeen, private detective, scours 1928 San Francisco in search of the man who stole a priceless medieval artifact. The thief, who is also a pathological killer, is not Skeen's only obstacle. The exquisite Frenchwoman and retired British colonel who are searching for the artifact also prove to be obstructions. Helping him in his search is his loyal and adoring secretary, Dilys Jones. Complicating the search are two Yale classmates, one of whom has penned a hit play that is headed for Broadway, but who has a secret about its true authorship. This is the other side of Sam Spade's San Francisco.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

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Customer Reviews

Three and a half stars. I do not usually read detective noir stories. I did really enjoy Cline's later work in the "Sparrowhawk" series. The roaring 20's was an interesting time, Wilson's statist grab for power and the 'Great War' were both over but the changes to come were just beginning. It is an interesting time to look to for setting a series of stories. I find the character's in "China Basin" very interesting and colorful. Skeen is his own man in a time when it was still okay to be a man. Jones has depth much greater than would normally be reserved for a 'secretary' or even a modern 'personal assistant'. The several detectives are each unique and colorful with strengths and weaknesses of their own. Finally the mystery is multi-layered with enough twists to keep a reader guessing. It is interesting to see the period used almost as a character in itself, as it really shapes and reflects those around it. Not great detective fiction, but good enough to keep on reading the

next book.

The Cyrus Skeen series of detective novels are set in San Francisco -- especially appropriate in the case of "China Basin", a tale with more twists and turns than Lombard Street. The plot centers on the murder of a reclusive dealer of mediocre antiques and the disappearance of a fabled medieval relic. Or does it? For it soon becomes apparent that in "China Basin" nothing and no one are quite what they seem. Evil has many faces -- devious, brutal, and craven -- but its essence will yield in the end to Skeen's rational scrutiny and determined pursuit. While Cline's detective series are frequently referred to as of the "noir" or "hardboiled" genre, they are refreshingly free of the cynical "antihero" gumshoe who anchors most such works. Private eye Cyrus Skeen's moral confidence is rooted in a clear understanding of the nature (and ultimate futility) of evil, and his optimism in his refusal to let it infect his personal life. "Roaring Twenties" San Francisco, vividly brought to life, is an ideal choice of setting for the Skeen mystery adventures.

I will read all of his detective stories. I have read all of the Sparrowhawk series, twice! He is fun to read and always interesting!

I will admit right up front that I am a sucker for just about any crime novel that is from a period 1950's or earlier. Given that some of those books can really stink I must say this book WAS INCREDIBLY WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED. Great characterizations; a history of an item belonging to Thomas Beckett that the characters were looking for was an amazing chapter. I will look for any and all of Mr. Cline's works to read in the future. I cannot believe that I got this book for free over the Christmas gorging of free Kindle books on . If crime, Noir books are to your liking then you will be enthralled by this one. In Noir the bad guys are usually very bad this one surely was. The good guys are bad in an endearing sort of way and Cyrus Skeen is my new hero.

Mr. Cline's detective books will put you right in San Francisco in 1928, that is I found them historically accurate. I am on my third Cyrus Skeen book now. You might have to use your dictionary a few times. I did and found the new old words fun part of the atmosphere. China Basin, now home of the SF Giants, was once a dark and dangerous place.

Very good. It's definitely a buy for anyone who enjoys classic detective fiction from the likes of Hammett and Chandler.

Ed Cline is a master at creating sophisticated intellectual mysteries with memorable characters, strong plots, plenty of action, and satisfying climaxes. In this novel, set in Roaring Twenties San Francisco and partly modeled after "The Maltese Falcon," tough, opinionated sleuth Cyrus Skeen tries to uncover a fabled historical relic from Medieval England while at the same time solving a modern literary mystery, taking on a whole gallery of opponents, from a crooked cop and a mysterious Frenchwoman to a maniacal killer. What dazzles the reader, in the end, is not just the plot twists, but the boldly American spirit embodied in all the author's works: freedom-worshipping, ambitious, confident, literate, benevolent, and individualistic. Readers should not miss Ed's magnum opus, the six-volume "Sparrowhawk" series, about the kind of free-thinking heroes who created the American Revolution; "We Three Kings," a no-holds-barred fight between an American entrepreneur and a murderous Arab diplomat; and the Chess Hanrahan detective series ("First Prize," "Presence of Mind," and soon-to-be-released "Honors Due")!

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