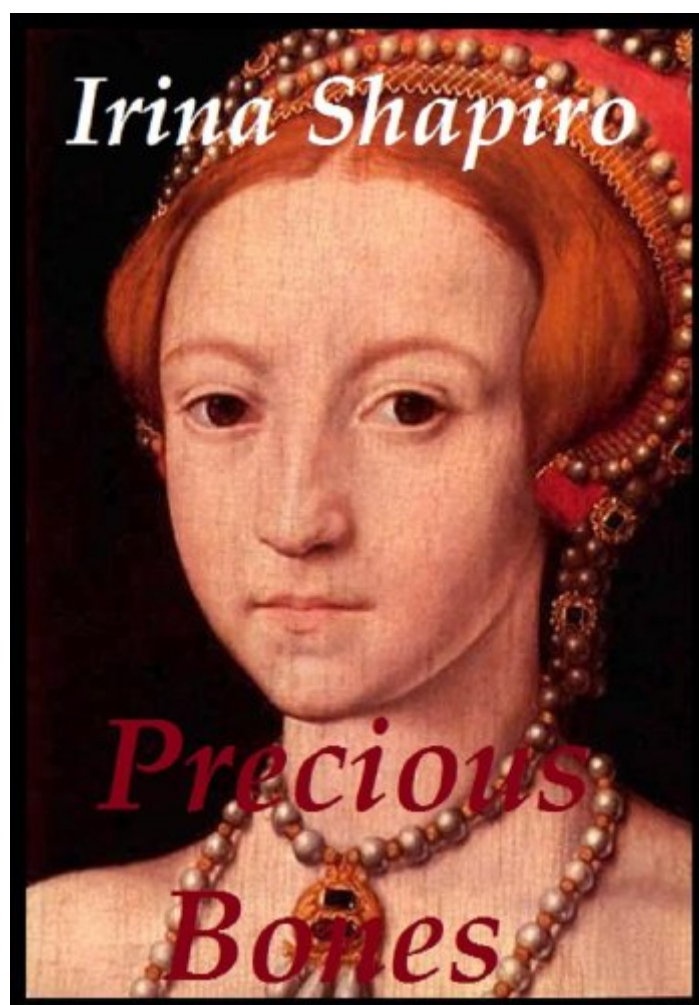


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# Precious Bones



## Synopsis

When the skeletal remains of a young woman and her baby are found entombed behind the kitchen wall of a historic Tudor house, Cassandra is overcome with grief. She seems to know who the young woman was, but not how she knows, or how she came to be there. Cassandra becomes inexplicably drawn to the house and the mystery of the "Bones of Blackfriars." As she begins to learn the truth about the Thorne siblings who occupied the house during the reign of Elizabeth I, her own life takes an unexpected turn, and she finds out that her fate is linked to the Thornes in ways she never imagined. Extensively re-edited 11/2015

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I find this story and the characters compelling enough to keep reading--I think there is talent there--but Ms. Shapiro is still learning her craft... and it shows. Parts of the book get bogged down in unnecessary detail; it makes her main character's life sound boring and mundane. Ms. Shapiro would be aided in her revisions by the thought that every sentence is precious and needs to either move the plot forward or develop the characters. Lengthy descriptions of a house or doctor's office are boring; a sentence or two is adequate. Pick out those things that your character would be most likely to notice, because what she finds interesting speaks to her character. Also, Ms. Shapiro needs

to read her dialogue aloud. If she did, she would notice that it doesn't flow naturally. Real people (including people in the Elizabethan period) speak in contractions; her dialogue is stilted and unnatural due to a lack of contractions. She also needs to use "she said" (or "mused," "replied," "asked," etc.) more often because it sometimes becomes confusing as to who is speaking. But the major complaint are the errors. Ms. Shapiro would be well-advised to hire an editor before taking her next book to press. There are numerous typos, grammar mistakes (most notably the inability to maintain the correct tense, great lack of commas, and poor paragraph breaking), and historical errors. For instance, the main historical character is the orphaned daughter of a master stone mason and the family is starting to fall on hard times. She ends up marrying a titled nobleman of wealth. This would have never happened in the Elizabethan period. Marriage was a business contract only and Constance had nothing valuable to offer. Love didn't count as a ware.

When I initially wrote my review, I hadn't quite finished the book--and wasn't sure I would--but upon reaching the end, I subtracted one star. To be honest, the only reason I finished this book was because the blatant historical inaccuracies made me laugh so hard! Why do people with zero knowledge of history always think it's easy to write historical fiction? Irina Shapiro exhibits a meager talent for storytelling, but her work is curtailed by her ignorance of the period, as well as a serious lack of skill in composition. This isn't the worst book I've ever read, but Shapiro should attend a few writing classes or read a couple of books about writing before publishing again. I'd describe her writing style as "limp, passive and repetitive." Overused adverbs abound, as well as bland descriptions constructed with passive verb tense, poorly written dialogue with a dearth of tags, and too much meaningless inner dialogue dragging the plot to a crawl. I had a hearty laugh when Turner told Cassandra, "Your story is so cliché" because this entire book is the definition of 'cliché.' When Cassandra interviews the local historian and states, "I'm trying to find as much as I can...I like to be accurate," I actually shrieked with mirth. (By complete coincidence, the heroine manages to find the only historian in England who knows the life stories of an obscure local working class family from 500 years in the past, but he doesn't know that James I was PROTESTANT, not Catholic.)\*\*\*CONTAINS SPOILERS\*\*\* (Though if you have any sense, it won't matter because you won't waste your time reading this book.) Shapiro's lack of research into Elizabethan England initially irritated me, until the mistakes became so outrageous that I couldn't stop laughing.

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