



# BOOK REVIEW

Book Title	<b>Just One Damned Thing After Another</b>
Author	<b>Jodi Taylor</b>
Date	<b>August 2019</b>
Stars	

A really good book is often formed out of a chemical reaction. In this instance where action and humour combine to forge a story which is fast-paced and exciting while making you laugh out loud. The tag-line for the book, is, for once, accurate. *“If you love Jasper Fforde or Ben Aaronovitch, you won't be able to resist Jodi Taylor.”* There is the crazy, Lewis Carroll-like-turning-the-world-upside-down comedy of Fforde, choice phrases that make you chuckle, witty observations of people and their behaviour that captures the eccentricities of the British. There is also the credibility of Aaronovitch in the research and knowledge that accompanies the adventures across history. And it's not dry history either, its fascinating touches that you probably never learned in school – but ought to have done. The result is a book I could not put down, I simply fell in love with it.

The publishers define the story as: *‘the first book in the bestselling Chronicles of St Mary's series which follows a group of tea-soaked disaster magnets as they hurtle their way around History.’* It's time travel Jim, but not as we know it. It's academic, conducted to inform professors in dusty lecture theatres, with data and research methods uppermost. Except, as its main character, Dr 'Max' Maxwell finds out on her first trip into the past, History doesn't tolerate interference.

The characters make this story so vivid. People who are frequently funny, though that is never their intention. People who are thoroughly unpleasant and deserve everything they get. They are real in the sense that they behave like the passionate people they are, they live, eat and breathe History. They argue, they fight, they have sex. Pretty much in that order. Add the Jodi Taylor's rebellious whimsy to the mix and you can't help but love these people, right down to their need to drink tea as each emergency unfolds. I mean, where else would you find time travel devices where essential equipment begins with a kettle, mugs and tea bags?

But don't expect this to be entirely a story that has you giggling. The action set pieces are thrilling, fast-paced, edge-of-your-seat stuff. There is real danger and characters die – and are mourned. People you will care about. That's what I mean about the chemistry of a good book. It takes talent to bring the two elements together to form a story that makes you laugh one moment and shed tears the next.

There's a huge collection of St Mary's chronicles. I've added them to my reading list. I can't wait to see where things go next. And laugh along the way.