

Bird Lives!**Bill Moody**

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Jazz musician Evan Horne makes a comeback in this fourth novel by Moody. Just recuperated from an injury to his hand and eager to get back to his work as a jazz pianist, Horne attempts to hang on to an opportunity for a new gig as he becomes increasingly involved in a case that is near and dear to his heart. Moody makes the music come alive through the story like no one else can, and his easy going amateur detective is a warm and sympathetic character that brings out his musical experience and love of jazz.

There are a lot of references to famous jazz musicians, and though the names like Charlie Parker and John Coltrane may be unfamiliar to some, by the end of the book readers may develop an appreciation for these jazz greats through the eyes of Horne. Horne has his share of personal dilemmas, and the case takes a toll on his relationship with his girlfriend and almost costs him a job.

An interesting interplay of characters makes for engaged reading, which builds in intensity up until the climactic ending. The plot moves along smoothly as the chapters progress and there is enough action and suspense to keep readers interested until the end.

Bird Lives! is a mystery that offers an entertaining peek at the jazz scene through the eyes of an insider.

CINDY PATUSZYNSKI (July / August 1999)

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