



Burn Up: The Secrets of Mylin - Book II

Joe Klingler

Cartosi (Jun 21, 2018)

Softcover \$15.95 (367pp)

978-1-941156-08-7

Burn Up is a gripping thriller from beginning to end.

A mysterious death at Burning Man evolves into a maddening rabbit chase of an investigation in Joe Klingler's *Burn Up*.

Qiqiq, an Alaskan gumshoe, and his sexy sidekick, Kandy, witness a daredevil cycling jump at Burning Man. It results in the death of Shen, the cyclist's, father. The dead man is also the father of Mylin, an extraordinary violist whom the detectives already know.

Crucial evidence is lost when the dead man's body mysteriously combusts. Qiqiq and Kandy get the runaround as they investigate. Unexpected are the dead bodies and cryptic code that emerge, linking Mylin, and the all-women orchestra she's connected to, to the incidents.

The cast is lightly developed, which befits the fast-paced book. Qiqiq's and Kandy's emotional lives fall to the wayside; their physical aspects and individual quirks are used to emphasize their sleuthing styles—or lack thereof—as are the ways that they play off of each other's idiosyncrasies.

A bit of an underdog, Qiqiq sometimes misses the mark as an investigator. He is characteristically late and is known for his love of decaf coffee and vintage Italian motorcycles. Still, Qiqiq shines at opportune moments. Kandy emphasizes her love for healthy eating and exercising over her sexy physique. Her quick wit and speedy responses to leads counterbalance Qiqiq's clumsiness. A colorful host of supporting characters function as foils, pushing Qiqiq and Kandy to test their endurance during tight situations and brightening scenes with lighter moments.

The narrative keeps to a crisp and edgy writing style that is enhanced by cliffhanging chapter endings. Quick dialogue captures Qiqiq and Kandy's unique working relationship; they frequently complete each other's sentences and deliver sarcastic comebacks.

Chapters focus on individual characters and cycle among Qiqiq, Kandy, Mylin, and Shen. While Qiqiq's and Kandy's chapters provide background to how they deal with aspects of their lives in connection with the investigation, Mylin's and Shen's chapters initially offer personal information that seems an awkward fit with the story. As the story unfolds, the chapters work better and better alongside each other; eventually, they converge.

Scenes juxtapose serious matters—including drug and human trafficking, espionage, and blackmail—to displays of art and music; they are a nice yin-yang mix. Unexpected plot twists build anticipation for the ending. Scenes punctuated by comedy, light romance, and investigative breakthroughs balance out the story's underlying tension.

The second book in the Secrets of Mylin series, *Burn Up* is a gripping thriller from beginning to end.

ANITA LOCK (August 26, 2018)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the author will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.