

Killing At The Cat

Carlene Miller

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Question: Can a book about a lesbian investigating the murder of a lesbian in a lesbian bar where 99 percent of the suspects are lesbians appeal to anybody but lesbians? In the case of this novel, yes, it can and should.

Lexy Hyatt, a fledgling reporter for an unnamed Florida city's newspaper, is having a drink at her favorite bar, The Cat. Only moments before an attractive woman in a purple suit walked by to talk to the owner. A short while later the woman is found in the bar's supply room, dead of what appears to be a blow to the throat.

Lexy investigates, bartering information with the two cops involved in the case. She quickly finds herself wearing two hats: Lexy the reporter, to whom nearly everyone lies; and Lexy the friend, to whom nearly everyone half-lies. As her case narrows, though, she realizes it is very likely that one of her friends is the murderer.

Killing At The Cat is a brisk, sexy read with a large cast of characters, only some of whom completely come to life. Carlene Miller's writing is crisp and clear, but for some reason the locale is unnamed and largely unrealized. It could take place in any city anywhere in the south. Given the many specifics of the novel, and the far-reaching and timely context, it seems odd that the setting of the novel is so amazingly generic. Overall, though, this novel succeeds on many levels and deserves a wide audience.

MARK TERRY (July / August 1998)

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