Clarion Review

Mystery

Restrike: Coleman and Dinah Greene Mystery No. 1
Reba White Williams
Delos
978-1-939052-00-1
Four Stars (out of Five)

Murder and espionage set the stage for amateur sleuths in the debut mystery, *Restrike*.

Coleman and Dinah are equally enamored of art, and both choose to move from North Carolina to New York to pursue careers in the art world. Coleman becomes the owner and editor of a successful art magazine, and Dinah opens a modest print gallery. When a young print dealer is found murdered, the cousins are convinced that there is a connection to the art scene, particularly since the man was recently involved in the auction of a very valuable print. To add to the intrigue, an enigmatic billionaire has begun throwing money around, and Coleman has discovered that someone in her employ is leaking her stories to a rival magazine. All of these events lead the cousins down some dangerous paths as they attempt to solve the mysteries.

The first installment of a planned series, *Restrike* is a compelling and suspenseful whodunit with interesting and often colorful characters. Coleman and Dinah are strong-minded heroines with the tenacity to pursue the truth in spite of personal danger. Coleman can occasionally come across as judgmental, particularly in her assessment of a certain employee she finds unattractive and lacking in fashion sense, but readers are likely to overlook her few shallow moments in favor of her stronger and more agreeable character traits. Her devotion to her pet dog, Dolly, who accompanies her everywhere, also adds a nurturing and charming aspect to her character.

Author Reba White Williams keeps the pace moving swiftly and smoothly as Coleman and Dinah get closer to the truth. The book is structured well, with alternating perspectives offering just enough information to keep readers glued to the page without giving anything away. The first few chapters are full of character introductions and a bit of name dropping to set the tone of the wealthy art scene. Subplots involving Coleman's past and present issues with men as well as some marital challenges for newlywed Dinah add depth to the characters and

diversity to the cast of players.

Williams has personal expertise in the art world, and she utilizes her knowledge effectively here. Along with a PhD in art history, Williams has written for art magazines for many years, and she also served as president of the New York City Art Commission. While familiarity with the arts is not necessary to enjoy the story, some readers may be a bit overwhelmed by the amount of information and art-related terminology. However, Williams offers enough clear descriptions that readers are sure to enjoy learning about the ins and outs of the New York art scene.

As the cousins begin to uncover more about billionaire Heyward Bain and get closer to finding the source of the magazine leaks—not to mention the identity of the killer—Williams keeps the secrets and mysteries coming and the two women busy as they peel back the layers of intrigue.

Restrike is flawlessly edited and contains enough twists and turns to keep even the most demanding mystery enthusiast interested. The conclusion of the novel wraps things up nicely and leaves a few new revelations incomplete enough to intrigue readers who will already be looking forward to the next Coleman and Dinah mystery.

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