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Trunk Music: Harry Bosch Series, Book 5



Synopsis

Back on the job after an involuntary leave of absence, LAPD homicide detective Harry Bosch is ready for a challenge. But his first case is a little more than he bargained for. It starts with the body of a Hollywood producer in the trunk of a Rolls-Royce, shot twice in the head at close range—what looks like "trunk music," a Mafia hit. But the LAPD's organized crime unit is curiously uninterested, and when Harry follows a trail of gambling debts to Las Vegas, the case suddenly becomes more complex - and much more personal. A rekindled romance with an old girlfriend opens new perspectives on the murder, and he begins to glimpse a shocking triangle of corruption and collusion. Yanked off the case, Harry himself is soon the one being investigated. But only a bullet can stop Harry when he's searching for the truth. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 12 hours and 40 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: June 17, 2008

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B001BACYFC

Best Sellers Rank: #37 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers > Police Procedurals #290 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Police Procedurals #762 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Crime

Customer Reviews

Harry Bosch is back after a "disciplinary vacation" and catches a murder case where the victim was the producer of B-level Hollywood movies. The victim is Tony Aliso, found in the trunk of his car, a hit sometimes referred to as "trunk music." Harry is joined by two black detectives, a man named Jerry Edgar and a woman called Kizmin "Kiz" Rider. Rider has been Harry's partner in other Connelly novels. Aliso's widow once acted in several of Aliso's films but never made a big splash in the movie industry.

Tony Aliso traveled often to Las Vegas to play poker and conduct some big stakes financial business with several mob bosses. Before you can say Jack Sprat, Harry is involved in a complex crime that involves various shady characters, police officials who seem tainted, and unwanted help from the FBI. On top of this, Harry's former lover, Eleanor Wish, returns and seems involved in the caper. Eleanor has been in prison for the last several years because of a felony conviction. Harry wants to resume their relationship but this presents a problem; if he associates with a known felon his job is in jeopardy. Harry and his partners travel back and forth several times from L. A. to Las Vegas, interviewing suspects and tracking down leads. The plot gets more intricate with every page you turn but it finishes in spectacular Connelly fashion.

The bad boy of the LAPD, Hollywood Division, is back on the job in this fifth entry in the Harry Bosch series. We last met Harry in *The Last Coyote*. He had endured an earthquake that made his house uninhabitable - although he continued to live in it - and he was again under suspicion of having committed grave crimes. After his innocence was proved, he was forced to take leave to recover from stress-related issues. He's now completed that leave and returned to work full time. He's back at work and with a new and more sympathetic boss, Lieutenant Billets (known, of course, as "Bullets"), but he hasn't had any murder cases. Until now. It begins with the body of a man, a low level Hollywood film producer, found in the trunk of a Rolls-Royce on the hills above the Hollywood Bowl. He had been shot twice in the head at close range and the murder bore all the signs of a Mafia hit - "trunk music" in the local parlance. Harry and his team of Jerry Edgar and a new detective called Kiz begin working the case and determine that the victim had spent a lot of time in Las Vegas and was a gambler which gives some validation to the idea that his murder might have been related to organized crime. The organized crime angle is the one they pursue at first, which is a good excuse to send Harry to Las Vegas and give us a glimpse of that glitzy world. Harry follows up leads but begins to feel antsy about it all. He intuits that there is a piece missing from the puzzle, but he can't lay his hands on it. While in Vegas, he runs into an old girlfriend, Eleanor Wise, the former FBI agent that he had been involved with a few books back. She had gone to prison for crimes related to that case, but now she's out after serving three years, and she's making her way in the world by playing poker. She and Harry are still attracted to each other and basically pick up where they left off. But back to the case. Harry begins to see a tangle of corruption and collusion involving the police in Vegas and one of the top crime figures in the city, and it seems that his victim back in LA was somehow involved with these figures, but how? What exactly is the connection? And what about the not so grieving widow? The records of the gated community where she lives show that

she was at home on the night that her husband was killed on his way home from Las Vegas, but can those records really be trusted? Her husband was cheating on her in Las Vegas and she seems to have known about it and she appears to be the one who would most benefit from the man's death. Or would that be the girlfriend, a very young woman who was a dancer at a strip club in Vegas and went by the name of Layla. Harry attempts to locate her but without any success. Then everything goes pear-shaped when it turns out that there is an FBI undercover operation investigating the same people who are of interest to Harry and the two get all tangled up together. Guess who comes out on the losing end? Back in Los Angeles, Harry finds he's now the one being investigated and he's been pulled off the case. But when did being removed from a case ever stop Harry from investigating? Solving murders is his calling. It's in his blood and once he's on the case, the only way to really remove him is with a bullet. This case turns out to be even more complicated than it at first appeared, but we can be sure that, after clearing out all the misdirections, Harry will get his man. Or woman. It struck me as I was reading that the character of Harry Bosch has evolved and grown. He seems more mature, more responsible in this adventure. Of course, he's never going to resolve his issues with the Internal Affairs Division - the "squints." They are always going to be looking over the shoulder of the bad boy of the LAPD, Hollywood Division.

There's really not all that much I can say about a Bosch book that I haven't said before. The plots are always well-crafted and complex, with excellent twists and turns that you never see coming. No threads are left hanging, no plot points unresolved. The world-building is excellent and always reflects the changing social climates, technology, and the like, as the series moves through the 90s toward the new millennium. All in all, this book was just another great installment of the series. It had a great mystery, some good action scenes, and a fairly satisfying conclusion. I can't really come up with any complaints. In fact, I actually like this book a tad bit more than I did some of the other novels, due largely to the inclusion of a new and improved cast. Kizmin Rider and Grace Billets added some good diversity to the mix of characters, which has, due to the (admittedly realistic) social climate of the LA police in the 90s, been a bit too white and a bit too male in the past. It was good to see the books reflect the sorts of social changes that actually occurred during this time period and bring in some fresh faces. It was also a great relief to see these faces well-characterized and not left flat on the sidelines. I think my only issue with the book was the final chapter, which involved a coincidence so absurd that it made me roll my eyes. Personally, I don't think it was necessary, and it took away from an otherwise strong ending. It wasn't a deal

breaker or anything, but I did fit it pretty annoying. Other than that, though, (and it is a pretty minor thing, to be honest), Trunk Music was another fantastic Bosch book, and I can't wait to get my hands on the next few in the series!

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