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Fever Tree: A Novel



Synopsis

When a handsome and mysterious stranger arrives in Crooked River, the town is consumed by rumors. Although a deeply private young man, Dieter befriends everyone from deckhands to shopkeepers. On the rebound from a disastrous relationship, the charming but hesitant Maggie Paterson falls in love. Teddy Mink, the town's notorious, paranoid drug lord, convinced that Dieter is a narc, formulates a plan to silence him. Maggie's recently estranged ex, who moonlights as a drug runner for Teddy, jealously agrees that Dieter must be handled no matter the cost. From the moonlit beaches of Quintana Roo to the waterfront docks of Crooked River, Florida, *Fever Tree* is a beautifully written story that charts the surprising journey of a deeply troubled young man zealously guarding the secrets of his past.

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Customer Reviews

Tim Applegate's first novel, *Fever Tree*, is a great read. Applegate is a film buff who grew up watching movies by Federico Fellini, John Huston, and Alfred Hitchcock. Having an appreciation for these directors, Applegate structures his novel into specific scenes, which could easily be transferred to the silver screen. *Fever Tree*'s protagonist, Dieter, suffers from depression. He has

been dealing with an unrevealed tragedy in his life as well as a drug addiction. When he arrives in the small town of Crooked River, Florida, a stranger, the townspeople have different theories of who he is. The intrigue builds and will keep the reader guessing if Dieter is a narc, as the local drug lord, Teddy Mink suspects. Applegate shows wonderful skill when Dieter deescalates a situation in a bar, which could have easily turned into a brawl. Every other paragraph is a flashback to Dieter being in Quintana Roo, Mexico, while he deals with the two men who only want to cause trouble. Another interesting aspect of the book is an intricately woven plot where characters catch glimpses of each other, such as Maggie Paterson watching Dieter swim naked across her pond, although she isn't introduced to him until later, when she stops to talk to her father at his antique store. Like the author, Dieter is from Indiana, knows how to refinish furniture, and has just written a successful first novel. I look forward to reading the second book of this trilogy.

Mark Thalman
Editor of poetry.us.com and
author of *Catching the Limit*.
Fever Tree: A Novel

The author gives the reader a variety of characters without loading you down with too much. You get a drug dealer (Teddy Mink), love (Maggie Paterson) and your protagonist, Dieter. What a mix! You as the reader get caught up in this story as the author pens his first novel. I liked that the story is written as chapters or more like scenes. I felt for Dieter and his dealing with a tragedy that occurred in his life. He has other troubles as well. When he arrives in Crooked River, he was a stranger and the people of the town weren't sure about him. The author will keep you guessing as to who Dieter really is. The people of Crooked River, Florida aren't sure either. Could he be dealing drugs in town? Or could we flip the sides? Could he be a narc? I felt he was a narc but as I turned the pages, I wasn't so sure. I liked the romance that starts to build when Maggie Paterson sees Dieter naked in the pond, without knowing him or that she would fall in love. What is Dieter really doing in Crooked River? Will Maggie and him fall in love? What will happen to the local Drug Lord? Written with a steady pace as you turn the pages, you won't be able to let go. You'll fall in love with the character, Dieter, no matter who he is and the ending may surprise you. This is book one of a three part series. Looking forward to book two soon. I received a complimentary copy of this book from the author and Amberjack Publishing in exchange for my unbiased and honest review.

Tim Applegate is a master at placing the reader in this cozy little southern town. His character sketches have the reader saying, "Yes ! I know someone just like this!" His knowledge of worldly subjects is not lost on the avid reader. Now on to the sequel!

Fever Tree at times can be disconcerting. Non-standard punctuation can make the reader hesitate at times, striving to separate narrative from background, but ultimately that conflict is what makes the stream of consciousness become real. In the novel, prose blurs with poetry, and observation blurs with perception or deception. The danger, the adventure, the sex; all are told from alternating perspectives, each of which makes sense in the end.

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