



Jimmy The Stick

Michael Mayo

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The Lindbergh kidnapping was one of the most highly publicized crimes of the 20th century. Charles Jr., the 20-month-old son of the famed aviator Charles Lindbergh, was abducted on March 1, 1932 from his home in New Jersey. The first week after the kidnapping was a time of fear, confusion and utter disbelief as America scrambled to come to terms with the horror, protect their own kids, and find someone to blame.

Jimmy the Stick is a historical mystery that takes place during this chaos. After retiring from a career of running with mobsters and working as a bootlegger, Jimmy started a speakeasy in New York City. Evoking the atmosphere of the 1930s Prohibition, his bar is a place where crooks, police and civilians can come for a nice drink in a dark and discreet atmosphere. His "retirement" ends, however, on the day after the kidnapping when he's inexplicably beat up at his bar, then brought to New Jersey to protect his former partner's son from Lindbergh's same fate. There, he discovers, the suburban calm of the rich is anything but, and worse, his crooked past is threatening to catch up to him...

"Mayo (American Murder: Criminals, Crime, and the Media) persuasively portrays such real-life mobsters as Meyer Lansky and Lucky Luciano in a tale sure to appeal to fans of Max Allan Collins's gangster historicals" -Publishers Weekly

Jimmy The Stick Details

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From Reader Review Jimmy The Stick for online ebook

Ward says

3.3 stars for Jimmy The Stick, the debut of the Jimmy Quinn mystery series set in post-depression New York. Added by flashback chapters, the reader learns of Jimmy Quinn's early days and connections with various Hells Kitchen mobsters and upbringing by Mother Moon, his surrogate mother who safekeeps his earnings and houses him in a room in her flat. Mother Moon "invested" in the orphaned Jimmy, recognizing the youth's talents and integrity, bringing him to the attention of gangster Arnold (A.R.) Rothstein, who contracted his services as a fleet-footed, tail-avoiding messenger of delicate messages and valued parcels. Anyway, fast-forward to the Lindberg baby kidnapping....and Jimmy's now owner of a speakeasy (still a shady guy, but he has integrity and independent from the mob hierarchy now, albeit his high-end booze is supplied by the mob and he does have to pay cops for protection....but that's just business). Well, now a kid from his gang past reaches out for his services, asking him to provide on-site protection at his home while he's out of town (his wife is scared because of the Lindberg kid's kidnapping). Inconvenienced, Jimmy still accepts this protection assignment out of loyalty to requestor Walter Spencer, and hence begins the mystery of various doings in and outside the Spence estate. The novel has good character development and you get a good feel for this part of history and old New York.

Lisa B. says

My Thoughts

I received an email from the publisher asking if I would consider reading this book since I have read historical fiction before.

“Why not?” I thought. But hey - wait a minute - what if I don’t like the story?

Well, not to worry, because I liked it a lot. I got involved with the story line right from the beginning. There is always something going on that keeps the story moving along at a good pace. Jimmy the Stick is a very likeable character. He is street wise and stands by his friends.

I thought the author captured the tone of the time period quite well. Mr. Mayo - I hope you have more stories for us in the future.

Thank you to Open Road Media/Mysterious Press for allowing me to read - via Netgalley - this ARC in exchange for an unbiased review. I’m sure glad you asked!

Publish date: October 16, 2012

Lolly says

Jimmy the Stick is an absolute gem of a suspense novel that takes place during the time of the Lindbergh

kidnapping. For years, Jimmy was a gunman and thief, working for a multitude of scandalous characters, including his adoptive “mother.” Now retired from working with mobsters, Jimmy aspires to operate a speakeasy and lives a relatively quiet life. An unexpected incident at his speakeasy and the news of the Lindbergh baby kidnapping changes everything. Summoned to the estate of a friend from his past, Jimmy reluctantly agrees to keep watch over his friend’s young wife and child while his friend leaves the state for business reasons. What should be an easy assignment is anything but, as Jimmy finds himself involved in one dangerous situation after another.

In spite of his criminal past, one can’t help but root for Jimmy, especially after reading about the recollections of his youth and other significant incidents which shaped him. Integrating elements of historical events adds to the enjoyment of the story, and provides a wonderful setting that is easy for the reader to visualize.

Know that this story has it all – great characterization, an outstanding story line that immediately engages the reader, and an ample supply of surprises that heightens the suspense. One doesn’t need to be an aficionado of the Prohibition period to enjoy this well-written first novel by Michael Mayo. It’s an excellent, satisfying read.

Bill says

Michael Mayo's JIMMY THE STICK is another winner from Mysterious Press, perhaps the most trusted publisher of mysteries in America.

Set in the hysteria following the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, Jimmy 'The Stick' has been hired by his wealthy old friend to supposedly guard his child from a possible kidnapping, but as Jimmy recalls his own past and friendship with his wealthy friend, he begins to suspect that he has been hired for more than that, and as he thinks back, he recalls and we are introduced to the most famous criminals of the early Twentieth Century, including Arnold Rothstein, most notorious for fixing the 1919 World Series, as well as many others, and Mayo raises questions about that whole Prohibition period - How soon did criminals organize their illegal sale of alcohol? How common was it to pay off the local police? When did drugs begin to creep in as another way to make huge profits?

JIMMY THE STICK is an excellent mystery set in one of America's most fascinating eras - a must read.

L.M. Elm says

Mayo provides a character that is both flawed and believable. Jimmy 'The Stick' is summoned to an old friend's home to keep a watch on his family and his estate. Nothing is as it seems and the tension escalates until its inevitable conclusion. Mayo also does a great job of providing the goings on in 1932, which don't overwhelm the plot at all.

Did not know this was a series. Maybe have to pick up the first one.

Otto Penzler says

Jimmy the Stick, the terrific debut novel by Mike Mayo, takes place in New York City during Prohibition and follows Jimmy, a crook turned "clean" after a bullet in the leg forced him to give up bootlegging with mobsters and open a speakeasy. He is close to retirement when the infamous Charles Lindbergh kidnapper strikes and the wealthy are terrified that their children might be next. Before long, Jimmy finds himself at his old friend Spence's mansion in New Jersey, hired to keep watch over Spence's family while he leaves town for work. Jimmy's dirty past quickly catches up to him, and babysitting a rich kid is much harder than it seems. Based on historical events with accurate portrayals of real mobsters, Jimmy the Stick is a great read for those who love crime/gangster mysteries.

Dlmrose says

3+

Keri says

I won this book and honestly I'm glad I got it for free. It was very stiff. I know it's based off of a true story but I felt that it could have been spiced up only a little and made a little bit more interesting.

Rachel says

One fabulous piece of fiction. I would never have guessed this was Michael Mayo's debut novel... The plot is well thought out, the characters are very realistic, and the time period detail is spot-on.

The story is set in early 1932, with flashbacks throughout the 1920s. Mayo does a great job of showing the period detail through characters and dialogue, rather than telling about historical detail. The characters use enough period slang to be real, without going over the top. The dialogue is never forced.

Jimmy Quinn, Jimmy The Stick, is a former runner for some serious gangsters. He was THE choice for delivering messages, money, and pay-offs quickly, quietly, and without ever getting caught. He was also one of the most accurate with a gun in the business. Following a knee injury that left him unable to do the job any more, Jimmy spends his nights running one of the most upstanding speakeasies in town. In one whirlwind night, in the wake of the Lindbergh kidnapping, Jimmy is thrust back into his former life when an old friend, Spencer, calls on him to serve as a bodyguard for his son.

Spencer is called away on family business, leaving Jimmy to watch out for Spencer's infant son, wife, and mother-in-law. It is not long before Jimmy realizes there's a lot more to the story than he's been led to believe, and he finds himself getting a lot more use out of his Detective Special and his "knucks" while trying to unravel the mystery. During his stay at Spencer's home, there's also a story within the story as we get flashbacks from Jimmy's childhood, how he became involved in organized crime, and how he came by the name "Jimmy the Stick".

Maxine says

Jimmy Quinn knows and has worked for all the big names in crime in NY but an accident while 'running' for Arnold Rothstein has left him crippled and earned him the nickname 'the stick'. Now he runs a quiet safe speakeasy in NY. It is 1932, and the Lindbergh kidnapping is the biggest crime story to hit the papers when Jimmy gets a call from his childhood friend, Spencer. Spence, who has married into an oil fortune, has to leave town and his wife is frantic that their baby will be kidnapped. Jimmy is a deft hand with a gun and Spence hires him to protect his son while he's away.

When Jimmy arrives at the Spencer home, Spence's wife seems frantic but, as soon as Spence leaves, she changes. Soon she is out every night partying with some very questionable friends and the baby seems the last thing on her mind. Something is definitely wrong in the Spencer household and soon Jimmy is caught up in a situation he's not sure he can control.

Jimmy the Stick is an homage to the hard boiled detective stories of the mid-20th century and, like those stories, this novel is more character than plot driven. Like the anti-heros of the early crime pulps, Jimmy is willing to work on either side of the law but he has his own strict moral sense which never falters. There is also the same black and white sense of reality to the book. Despite the fact that most of the characters are crooks and/or worse, there is a clear delineation between right and wrong - some people just deserve to be killed and left unmourned but kidnapping a child is beyond the pale.

Jimmy the Stick is the debut novel by author Michael Mayo and a pretty darned good debut it is. Fans of Spillane and Hammett or of historical detective fiction, this one's for you.

John McKenna says

Mysterious Book Report No. 145

By John Dwaine McKenna

For many crime fiction fans, the Prohibition Era of the 1920s and the Great Depression in the 30s holds an intense fascination that, even now, almost one hundred years later, captivates our collective imaginations. The gangster age as it became known, really began at the end of the Great War—the first mechanized conflict and the largest war the world had ever known. Then came the Roaring Twenties, with the Jazz Age, the stock market crash, and of course, the Volstead Act, or Prohibition, which gave rise to the golden age of crime, speakeasys, bathtub gin and an entire nation of scofflaws, determined to have a readily available supply of adult beverages whenever they wanted. All the while, stock prices on the NYSE were rising to new highs on a weekly basis . . . until the great crash of 1929, which ushered in The Great Depression of the 1930s, and world upheaval.

Against that colorful background and the kidnapping of the Lindberg baby, comes a new novel that recalls the essence of the period in a fast, afternoon and evening read. Jimmy the Stick, (Mysterious Press/ Open Road Integrated Media, PB \$14.99, 220 pages, ISBN 978-1-4532-7095-0) by Michael Mayo, revisits “those thrilling days of yesteryear,” when prohibition was the law of the land. The fictional Jimmy Quinn, better known as Jimmy the Stick because he uses a cane to support a bum knee, was a highly placed mobster and a known gunman during the New York City Beer Wars of the Roaring Twenties, associating with the likes of Myer Lansky, Charlie ‘Lucky’ Luciano, Owney Madden, Dutch Schultz and Vincent ‘Mad Dog’ Coll. The

murder of Arnold Rothstein in 1928 and a bullet in the leg ended Jimmy's career. Now, in the spring of 1932, he's been called out of retirement by his boyhood pal and criminal running mate, Walter Spencer. Spencer's gone legit—he's married into the Pennyweight Petroleum family, the father of an infant boy, and he needs a favor from Jimmy. The Lindberg baby has just been kidnapped. The Spencer's are afraid that they're next on the kidnapper's list, and Walter has to leave town to negotiate some oil drilling leases. He asks Jimmy to guard his wife and baby while he's away. With Spencer gone, Jimmy is quickly up to his neck with the bizarre goings-on in the Pennywright mansion, trying to protect the family in spite of themselves and keep hard criminals from his former life out of the picture. Any fan of the Prohibition and Gangster Eras, as I am, will find it a fun and entertaining read. If you're unfamiliar, it's a great introduction that will leave you hungry for more.

Enjoy the review? The greatest compliment you can give is to share it with friends on Facebook or follow us on Goodreads.

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P.a. Jaroma says

So so, didn't do it for me
