



My Buddy: A Commemoration For 'Buddy Bolden' The First Man Of Jazz

Gail F. Young

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'MY BUDDY, A Commemoration For Buddy Bolden, The First Man Of Jazz,' was originally a short story of fiction written a few years before the deadly hurricane, Katrina. It was later transformed into a novel. Although a work of fiction, 'My Buddy,' contains numerous facts and truth, so it connects intimately with black people and empowers them with a deeper sense of cultural pride. The story centers around Anwar Rasual, a black jazz preservationist, musician and professor. It does not focus on Buddy Bolden, the black New Orleans native that has been credited with the invention of jazz; however, there are tidbits of information that gives the reader a good idea about the life of Buddy Bolden and the racial climate in New Orleans at the time of his emergence. The story also sheds light on attitudes and situations as well as the role prejudices and oppression has played in black culture. The main character, Anwar, races against a deadline to find relics having belonged to Buddy Bolden but also finds HIMSELF, something he had not known he'd lost. The character Giles, poses as a metaphor to use ploys that represents the real-life attacks on black creation and the constant attempt to discredit black contributions from the ancient to modern worlds. Although Buddy Bolden cringed and bowed out of the music scene prematurely, a blueprint serves to remind us that the world would be quite barren without his contribution, the crystallization of his soul; the heartbeat of jazz. In this novel that contains love, loss, hope, and triumph, 'My Buddy,' is a story of redemption that speaks especially to the souls of black people and their ancestors who were kidnapped, chained, shipped to and denigrated in strange and bitter places throughout the diaspora.

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