



2nd Time Around (A B-Boy Blues Novel #2)

By James Earl Hardy

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Pooquie and Little Bit are back in love and back to stirring up the hip-hop community and the rest of New York. But as these two strongly independent yet passionately linked men discover, the pursuit of happiness takes work to maintain. This is the seriously sexy, fiercely funny, black-on-black sequel to the bestseller B-Boy Blues.

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2nd Time Around (A B-Boy Blues Novel #2) By James Earl Hardy Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The Second Time Around is the sequel to *B-Boy Blues*, Hardy's hugely successful first "Africentric" gay hip-hop novel. Raheim Rivers is back, and he's trying to pick up the pieces and carry on with his life. The narrative is mostly dialogue—either Raheim's conversations with himself or with the people in his life—and it provides an engaging, immediate window to Raheim's character and his dawning maturity. The novel begins with and is centered around Raheim's reconciliation with his lover, Little Bit, who left him after Raheim hit him in a fit of jealousy. Through a series of flashbacks to his youth, readers learn what made Raheim the man he is now—a black man in love with another black man, not entirely out of the closet, prone to bursts of verbal violence and, most importantly, a man with an enormous capacity for love and for learning from his mistakes. Added to Raheim's struggle to win back Little Bit's trust are the complexities of co-raising his son, L'il Brotha Man. Raheim is determined to be a better father to his son than the one who left him and his mother behind. Things move in cycles of beginnings and endings, from Raheim's burgeoning modeling career to L'il Brotha Man's graduation from kindergarten. The result is an upbeat tale which, while confronting issues of violence, racism and homophobia, is romantic, absolutely sensual and downright funny. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

Fans of Hardy's stereotype-breaking *B-Boy Blues* (1994) will welcome this sequel, not least because it picks up where *B-Boy* left off, with gentle, educated, conventional-English-speaking, upper-middle-class Mitchell and his homeboy lover Raheim, whose family doesn't know he's gay, who speaks rappish black English yet is well read and wants to be a good father to his son, Junior. Mitchell is still writing freelance, Raheim is making it big-time as a model, and Junior still worships his daddy. The plot unfolds a little less quickly this time, but Hardy continues to astonish in such moving scenes as Mitchell's meeting with Raheim's mother and former wife. Equally important are the revelations Hardy affords of the reluctance with which two black socioeconomic classes come together and of the gap between the black gay and straight worlds. These concerns in Hardy's fiction elevate it from the level of mere entertainment to that of the work of such classic socially critical American novelists as Sinclair Lewis. *Charles Harmon*

From Kirkus Reviews

Hardy's follow-up to 1994's *B-Boy Blues* preserves the author's rep as a dazzling chronicler of "street," gay, African-American culture. Sheer reporterly skill, however, sometimes gets in the way of structure and plot. A barrage of authentic dialogue casts the lives of Raheim "Pooque" Rivers, a bicycle messenger, and Mitchell "Little Bit" Crawford, a journalist, in high relief: The men are still in love and still contending with the significant differences both between their individual cultures and more particularly between the gay black and white worlds. Raheim is raising his young son, "L'il Brotha Man," while remaining conflicted about his sexuality. He hasn't been able to shake his hand-grenade temper and appetite for lapsing into African-American hypermasculine poses, despite the fact that his homosexuality is becoming more visible. Interspersed throughout are chapters labeled "Rewind," which offer glimpses of Raheim's former life—the birth of his son, for instance, plus a few saucy meditations, delivered in serious slang, on the pleasures of the flesh. In quick succession, Raheim becomes a male model and learns that his father is not, as he was led to believe, dead. A poignant moment follows in which Raheim has to explain this fact to L'il Brotha Man; Raheim's courage, both at rebelling against his father's example and sticking by L'il Brotha Man, and at working on his relationship with Mitchell, emphasize Hardy's upbeat attitude toward black-family alternatives. The story's tied up rather too tidily at the end, and Hardy doesn't always succeed in masking a thin plot with electrifying dialogue, but the characters—and their language—virtually jump off the page.

Hardy manages to combine unself-conscious sentiment and blistering emotion in voices that refocus gay and African-American storytelling. A thoroughly fresh presence in an increasingly crowded field. -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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