



Rare Birds

L.B. Hazelthorn

Allegorie Press (Jul 1, 2024)

Softcover \$19.99 (344pp)

978-0-648-64730-0

A woman learns about her frightening family connection to gods and demons in L. B. Hazelthorn's novel *Rare Birds*.

Rom knows almost nothing about her grandfather, Jasper, save that he was obsessed with the supernatural—or “nonsense,” as Rom, an archaeology student, puts it. She isn't thrilled to inherit the old man's dog, Pixie. But strange events and an even stranger murder indicate that Pixie is not what she seems, leading Rom and her loved ones into an adventure that pits them against fearsome beings who sell dangerous magic for a most terrible price.

Rom and her beloved asexual roommate, Ditto, have little money but still demand a taste of the glittering world of the Roaring Twenties: drinking, parties, and modern music. Their ordinary lives are upended by the arrival of treacherous creatures that Jasper once made horrifying sacrifices to study. With help from others—including Rom's insufferable but clever stepbrother Morgan—they begin an investigation. Along the way, they deal with uneasy alliances, feuding demons, and devilish bargains to combat forces that no human—not even one as curious and independent-minded as Rom—can hope to understand.

As the full scope of Jasper's grand ambitions and subsequent misdeeds comes to light, Rom takes risks of her own with fatal consequences. She and her allies can only watch as betrayals and grudges raise the stakes of their quest. They each decide how far they are willing to go—and what they are willing to give up—for family. In the end, Rom is left stunned by the fantastical truth about all that the world contains...and by the depths of her own capacity for cruelty.

Rare Birds is a tense supernatural mystery in which a girl struggles to hold her morals steady as her world spins out of control.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (July / August 2024)

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