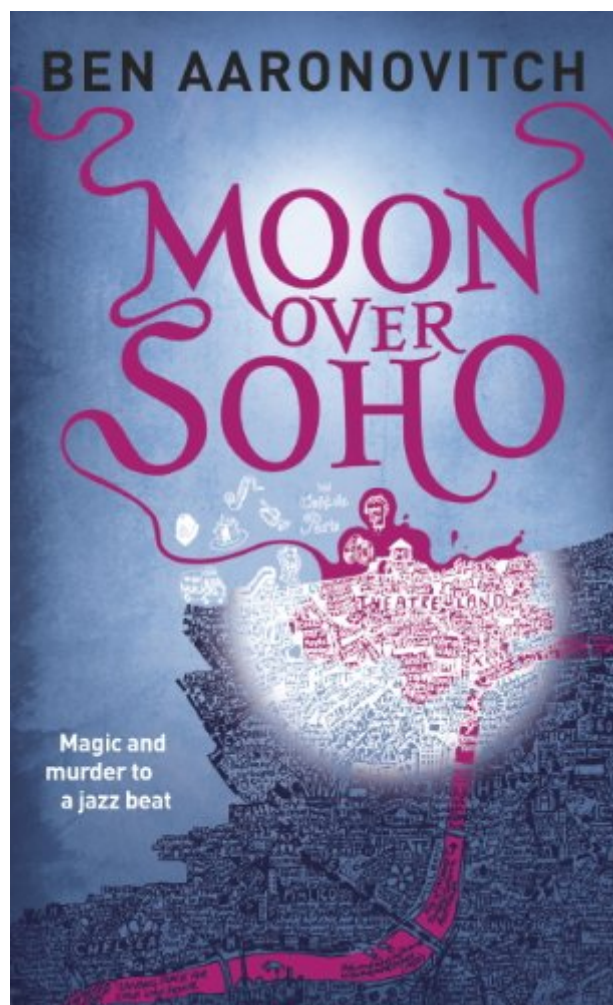


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Moon Over Soho (PC Peter Grant Book 2)



Synopsis

BODY AND SOUL – The song. That’s what London constable and sorcerer’s apprentice Peter Grant first notices when he examines the corpse of Cyrus Wilkins, part-time jazz drummer and full-time accountant, who dropped dead of a heart attack while playing a gig at Soho’s 606 Club. The notes of the old jazz standard are rising from the body – a sure sign that something about the man’s death was not at all natural but instead supernatural. Body and soul – they’re also what Peter will risk as he investigates a pattern of similar deaths in and around Soho. With the help of his superior officer, Detective Chief Inspector Thomas Nightingale, the last registered wizard in England, and the assistance of beautiful jazz aficionado Simone Fitzwilliam, Peter will uncover a deadly magical menace – one that leads right to his own doorstep and to the squandered promise of a young jazz musician: a talented trumpet player named Richard – Lord • Grant – otherwise known as Peter’s dear old dad. From the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Magic, mayhem and the Met again, mixed in with jazz, evil wizards and accidental necromancy. Someone is killing the jazzmen of London and there’s a strange kind of rapist-killer stalking the

clubs. Constable Peter Grant finds out more about his mentor, their strange housekeeper, and what happened to his famous father's musical career. Along the way he does a lot of shagging on rooftops and underfurnished apartments, perhaps as a way of coping with the awful things he keeps finding in basements. One of the good things about Rivers of London was that no one was safe. The streets are in chaos, the victims are random, some survive and some don't. Hero Peter Grant's best friend and lust object ends up horribly disfigured, and in both Rivers of London and Moon Over Soho we see Grant struggling with his sense of responsibility for that - and in particular whether magic can restore what magic destroyed. This feeds in to his desire to understand the source of magic and its relationship to life or life-force. It's an interesting illustration of a post-Enlightenment, scientifically trained mind trying to come to terms with the irrational, with something which doesn't fit into one's understanding of the universe and how it works. Although Grant seems oblivious to the fact that Greater Minds Than His have struggled with the same questions (a character oversight which at this stage I can only hope is intentional or Aaronovitch's part). But what I liked about this aspect of Moon Over Soho is that it gives us a taste of What Happens Next. The victims of the chaos in Rivers of London aren't left behind in the second book; they're still part of Grant's world, as both a copper and a friend, and at least one of them is a victim and possibly and instigator of what follows in Moon Over Soho.

If you'll remember from the first volume, Detective Constable Peter Grant is part of the Metropolitan Police's "Economic and Specialist Crime Unit". It consists of two people - Grant and his mentor, DCI Nightingale. Nightingale is much older than he appears and infinitely more knowledgeable: he's a wizard. Grant, due to a combination of inclination and misfortune, is also a wizard - at least, he's trying really hard at it. In the first volume, Grant is wrapped up in a fairly horrific little mystery that involves dark magic and people's faces falling in. The second volume starts with the same promise: someone out there is doing something nasty (and magical). Grant needs to solve it. This time around it is also more personal. The naughty-maker is offing jazz musicians, and Grant's dad is one of the best in the business. Although he's always been wary of it, Grant finds himself easily absorbed into the jazz scene. He finds friends (and ladyfriends) and indulges himself in a little second-hand fame due to his father's reputation. These new contacts prove valuable when it comes to snooping about in the dark and spicy Soho underworld. Just to keep things interesting, there's also something out there eating people's anatomy. Eep. The balance here is between plot and meta-plot. One of the cases above is a fairly transparent whodunnit. I'm not the savviest mystery reader, but I found absolutely no mystery in who actually did it. The only detection was trying to

guess if Grant was being particularly thick or if he actually knew all along and was stringing us along for extra overtime pay. This case is the book's self-contained plot.

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