



The Five

Robert R. McCammon

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The Five tells the story of an eponymous rock band struggling to survive on the margins of the music business. As they move through the American Southwest on what might be their final tour together, the band members come to the attention of a damaged Iraq war veteran, and their lives are changed forever.

The narrative that follows is a riveting account of violence, terror, and pursuit set against a credible, immensely detailed rock and roll backdrop. It is also a moving meditation on loyalty and friendship, on the nature and importance of families—those we are born into and those we create for ourselves—and on the redemptive power of the creative spirit. Written with wit, elegance, and passionate conviction, The Five lays claim to new imaginative territory, and reaffirms McCammon's position as one of the finest, most unpredictable storytellers of our time.

The Five Details

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Author : Robert R. McCammon

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From Reader Review The Five for online ebook

Daniel says

In "The Five," Robert McCammon takes his time telling the whole story, and I am so glad that I gave him my own time to take it all in. The story gently builds around the members of the eponymous band and a few individuals closely tied to it. Each band member has a history, and McCammon introduces each of these in their own time throughout the tale, revealing just enough to realize personalities and motivations while leaving other parts in the shadows, where their palpable presences pulsate with mystery and the potential for bigger happenings. Dark tones and plots arise and spread forth, and just as McCammon settles events into a recognizable passage, he pounces with a brutality that changes up the story and throws previous assumptions into questions. The greater conflict of the story, once introduced, looms somewhere on the edges, born on "black wings" that beat with dreadful patience. I could almost imagine a storyteller behind the prose saying, "Wait, wait. Wait and see where this all goes."

I appreciate the care that McCammon (must have) put into this novel. The members of the Five are full characters that invite interest and empathy and further reading. Each is experiencing something significant in the story, and each reacts to these forces in different--and sometimes unpredictable--ways. McCammon does tread across waters that sound and feel familiar (one member of the band is the "lone wolf," another is the "young hippie girl"); still, he gives this material the same genuine, earnest tone that he does to everything else in the story. Reading this novel made me glad that I am not completely cynical, and that I can still hear music that moves and overcomes me. I also very much like how McCammon suggests supernatural happenings with just enough emphasis to tantalize, but not enough to spell out another iteration of the "magic in the real world" trope.

"The Five" is a full, thoughtful, and satisfying read. I can't say that I have read anything like it in the past, and I will be surprised if I ever find anything like it in the future. For its size, it is not so much a story of epic proportions as much as it is a quiet tome that meditates upon the emotions, histories, creations, and desires of a group of individuals who are compelled to make music and play it for others to hear--an act that is itself epic, heroic, and also magical.

Kimberly says

How do you review a book that effects you on so many different levels? I've long been a fan of McCammon's work, and I have to say that this novel had so much depth to it that it was extremely hard to tear myself away from. The scenes and characters work on you so subtly that you don't even realize how absorbed in the story you've become until you are forced to stop temporarily. This was an incredibly rich, revealing novel that really brings home the impact that music has in our lives and our world.

Highly recommended!

Matt says

I'm inclined to strongly disagree with Mr. S. King of Bangor. The Five is definitely not Mr. McCammon's

best book. It's nowhere even close to that. The Five is not "putdownable," not "full of rock and roll energy" not a book I'll "beg my friends to read" as suggested by Stephen King on the back dust-jacket blurbs. It almost pains me to say this in light of McCammon's other fine novels, but The Five is really not very good at all.

The story of the musicians Ariel, Nomad, Mike, Terry and Berke (The Five of the book's title) and the terribly damaged Iraq War veteran who changes their lives forever is simply not embued with scenes and characters that are worthy of twenty minutes of memory following the last sentence. In fact, there's nothing in the book that's memorable beyond what you might see in an average made-for-TV movie, or in any hyped-up big screen movie for which you've paid a king's ransom of a ticket price. You go in expecting the big bang of a box of TNT and you come out with a frown and "m'eh" worthy of a single pull-string popper.

Yes, The Five is a meditation on loyalty and friendship. Yes, it's about families and strength in the face of great adversity. Yes, it's about love and the noblest spirit of art. Too bad the characters who are supposed to embody all those fine aspects of humanity are about as interesting as a bag of rocks.

Subterranean Press did their usual fine job with the design of the book. That I liked. But that's about it.

Robert McCammon is a very good writer, better in some ways than King, Koontz, Barker, Rice, and a half-dozen other writers the average person can name. He's written some damn good stuff, some novels and short stories that I'll definitely read again before my lights go out forever. But The Five...eh, no.

J.K. Grice says

THE FIVE is about a rock band traveling the country, except the members of the group are being targeted for murder, one by one. This book showcases McCammon's personal interest in music, and makes for an entertaining story. I enjoyed the characters and the plot.

Twierking To Beethoven says

Robert McCammon is the author of a bunch of horror novels - I've read Swan Song and They Thirst, both are five star material - and one of my all time favourite books, if not my all time favourite novel, Boy's Life (if you haven't read it yet, go get your copy; seriously, do it!). And, as it usually happens to talented authors, he has been criminally overlooked while other mediocre writers, whose name I won't mention here, keep selling tons of copies.

I'm sorry to report that "The Five" doesn't play on the same league as the titles I've mentioned. I mean, You can tell the book is a labour of love, and that McCammon has put his heart and soul into it, trying to write the ultimate love letter to the music he loves.

Also, I'm sure he's spent quite some time doing a great deal of research as he seems to have a great, deep and extensive knowledge of the gear rockers use in order to make music; he talks about electric guitars and basses, drum kits, amplifiers, cabinets, electric pianos, synthesizers, hammond organs, the lot; and he sounds like someone who knows his shit. He mentions brands and models and, on more than one occasion, he

explains how that particular item works and what sort of sounds it produces. I mean, you have to respect that, I think.

That said, unfortunately the book is a bit too long and a tad too slow. IMHO, it would have been a much better novel if, say, at least 150 pages had been cut off. One chapter in particular, the 21st, I found to be... what's a nice word for "useless"? Well, there you go.

Anyway, I still love McCammon's writing. He really has a way with words so, over all, three stars is a fair rating.

Oh yes, go get your copy of "Boy's Life". Ok?

This is what the cover looks like.

And you need to read it.

Wow, what time is it?

Jo Anne B says

This book rocked me to my core and made me so emotional that I cried about it afterwards while listening to the Verve's "Bittersweet Symphony."

The book begins with a quote from the song "Bittersweet Symphony" and Robert McCammon mentions it was what inspired him to write this book. At one point in the book, Nomad, the leader of the band The Five, says "I believe a song can speak to a person." I believe that too. I also believe that books can speak to a person too. This book spoke to me.

I have never had a book touch me and effect me in this way before. This book was so deep and heavy hearted making you think so much about your own life and its purpose. There is no way I can write a review that truly captures the emotional toll it left on me and do it justice. All I can say is that Robert McCammon is a genius. How he can write such a profound book like this is beyond me. It just makes me think of what he wrote in The Five. This is a quote from Floyd Fisk to his stepdaughter Berke: "If you ever doubt what your place is in your profession, or if you ever doubt what changes for the better music can make in this world, open these boxes and start reading. I believe that at its best music exists to give a voice to people who sometimes can't speak on their own. I believe it helps weak people find their strength, and frightened people find their courage. I believe it helps people understand with their hearts what their minds can't comprehend. I think it may be the truest link to a higher power. Never ever doubt that you have an important place in this world."

This book was about a rock band The Five that had struggled to make it for years but suddenly become famous overnight when one of their band members gets killed by an Iraq war Marine sniper. The Marine was in the midst of committing suicide when he heard their song on the tv. He was angry at the lyric's the band member Ariel sang about the soldiers killing children in Iraq. This book follows the band on their tour with an FBI agent pretending to be their manager to try to catch the sniper. This book brings in a lot of music

history knowledge that I know very little of but appreciate. It also gave the reader a backstage view of what it is like to be in a rock band. Nomad asked himself “How long did you give your life to the dream, before it took your life?”

So much of this book was about people’s roles and if they were good enough. Felix Gogo’s advice to the band’s leader Nomad was “know your role”. In the beginning of the book Nomad didn’t believe people had to know their role. He was so full of anger he acted on impulse ignoring the confines of any “role”. Nomad had thought that the middle-aged Denny’s waitress that served him was “all too happy in her role so she must be dense”. Nomad was used to being angry and unhappy because it was the familiar feeling he had always felt as a kid. Anyone that was happy, especially an older woman that was just a waitress, “must be a little dense to be truly happy or oblivious enough to think you were.” Nomad became scared when they became successful because lost his role in the band. He was the angry one. But he started to lose his anger and thus his role and questioned whether he was good enough. Ariel told him “No one’s good enough! Everybody has to push, and push, and try to break through some kind of wall. I know I’m not good enough. But I hope-I plan- on being better tomorrow. You start from where you are.” Berke’s stepfather said she told him at a concert that she could do better than the drummer and that is what inspired her to become a musician.

This book had a lot of spirituality and faith in it. Nomad was questioning whether or not he believed in soul mates like his friend Thor did wondering why God would make it so hard to find one. Thor told Nomad, “God is not a nice guy. He’s a hard teacher. He’s tough, nothing soft about Him. Oh yeah, He can show mercy. He’s all about mercy. But He’s all about teaching, too. He’s the hardest fucking teacher you could ever have. Sometimes you don’t want to hear it, so you turn your back. Sometimes the lessons are pushed right in your face, you can’t turn away. What we call cruel, maybe He calls....necessary, in some way we can’t wrap our minds around because we only know the right here, right now.”

The Marine sniper that was trying to kill The Five was humanized by the FBI agent who was also a former Marine. He tried to explain to Nomad how the Marine no longer knew his role. “So he’s the best of the best, doing what he’s been trained to do, and then something terrible happens to him there (he kills a kid) and at home (his wife and son are killed in a car accident) and the spirit drains out of him and leaves him basically a broken shell. But he has no serious and long-lasting physical injuries, and maybe he can cover up his psychological wounds because he’s been trained to be tough and to deny pain, and his own father has taught him a lot of that (through abuse). The VA hospitals are understaffed and overworked, so solid tough guys like Jeremy Pitt are given a certificate that says how much the Marine Corps appreciates their service. Maybe their awarded a medal too, like Pitt was, so they can remember what sets them apart from men like you and remember that you were somebody. Then this broken young veteran who’s been trained to kill people at over 800 yards goes out into the world looking for work. And there’s so much competition for jobs and you take what you can get. And maybe, if you were Jeremy Pitt you’d had plans set out for your entire life, but you know plans don’t work out. After you keep hitting a wall and you realize you live in a world that can’t ever measure up to what you once knew...you start trying to find a new enemy, because only a battlefield makes you feel worth living.”

The FBI agent said that none of the band members couldn’t relate to the sniper because none of them had really fought for anything worth dying for but Nomad said they have. He said that as musicians they are fighting to be heard. At the end when the sniper is nearing his death he was confessing to Ariel that “I am not a good guy. But the other soldiers weren’t like him at all. We didn’t go over there to kill children. We went to do our job. They weren’t all like me. Do you hear?” Only she knew what he needed. She thought to herself it was so simple, yet so important that the lack of it could crush a soul. She told him ‘I hear you.’”

There was a lot said of the music industry too. After it was all over the band’s agent was mad that they were

breaking up and refused to do a reality tv show because they were sick of making money off a tragedy. He told them, “All I can say is that we’re talking about the age-old war between business and art. Correct? Friend, business won that war a long time ago. And if you don’t already know that to be the truth then... Welcome to the world.”

The band’s last song was a tribute song to their dead band members that they all wrote together and it was about “just when you think there’s nothing new in this old world” restoring their faith in their profession and their roles. Their song “was about acceptance. Accepting who you are, within the limitations of a hard old world. It was realizing that sometimes things in the tough old world squeezed you, and crushed you, and drove you down into the dirt. But to survive, to keep going, you had to lighten yourself. To cast off things that no longer mattered, things that wore you down or weighed heavy on you. You needed courage to keep going, and sometimes you found it in yourself and sometimes in others. And it might seem hopeless, it might seem a fool’s path, and it was never safe travel even though an angel might wish it were so for you, and some things never changed, they never would, but nothing ever changed unless you believed they could. And it was still the same old world as it had been yesterday. It was still a hard old world, a tough old world. It would always remain so. But it was a world that could not be described in just four minutes (the length of their song), with all its universe of good and evil, strong and weak, light and dark. It was the world, as it would ever be. People lived and people died, and the lives of people were precious; their time to create and exist, live and love, was also precious. The song said, keep trying, keep living in the fullness of life, keep growing and creating, because no one gets out alive. It was not a cry of fear; it was a declaration. You are here today, said the song. One tomorrow, you will not be. The song asked: Between those days, what will you do? Who will you become? Could it be a new world, in this old one? It could be. Might it be a new world, in this old world? That was for each person to decide. Travelling there was an inward journey, across an often fearsome land. The world within each person, the private world help deep within. That was where the change happened, where a world could be made in the midst of the old. And that journey took all the courage you had.”

At the end of the book, Jenn, an anorexic girl whose mom was the Denny’s waitress was starving herself because she wanted to feel closer to her dead father who could barely eat anything in his final days suffering from cancer, listened as the final song of the five spoke to her, “I’m sitting here like a candle on the darkest night”. She thought of her father in his final days telling her he didn’t want her getting sick. “Do you hear me? You have a life ahead of you. Hear me? I want you to be somebody’s candle, Jenn. I want you to show somebody your light. I think with your talent and your heart, that’s what you’re gonna do. But you can’t get sick. You can’t follow me. Do you understand that?” Unfortunately Jenn did understand but her anorexia was out of her control at that point. But after hearing their song and remembering what her father told her, she thought, her father had found a way to get through. “The song had spoken to her in a way she thought it could speak to no other person in the audience. But she thought she could do better. She wanted to give a voice to people who had none. She wanted to speak clearly, and to clearly be heard. And to do that, you also had to clearly hear.” She decided she wanted to “enthral and delight, to dance to a beat, to have fun, to laugh and help people shrug off the worries of the world for a little while. To help them find their strength when the crows came flying.” So Jenn finally started to eat the breakfast her mother made every morning for her before she left to go to work at Denny’s and thought about that song more, “Some things don’t change, they never do. Some things do change, they change with you.”

I was left speechless with a lump in my throat. So I turned on “Bittersweet Symphony” and cried. I had been spoken to.

Bill says

There is a reason Robert McCammon is one of the best storytellers in the business. His work makes you feel like you are right there in the mix with the characters. There is depth, vivid imagery and true emotion. Dude has skills.

I am not a musician and don't know anything about the biz, but it doesn't matter because Mr. McCammon takes care of all the backstage details with a realism that rings true, even for a music outsider like myself.

This may be the last tour for The Five. There's time for only one more song. It's a song of death. A song of redemption. A song of faith. A song that will forever change the lives of the band and those who are touched by them. Fire up the cowbell and have a shot or two in the green room. The show is about to begin.

Cody | codysbookshelf says

The Five has been on my radar for at least four years, and I've finally read it. After also working through *Boy's Life*, *They Thirst*, and *Gone South* this year, one thing is for sure: Robert McCammon is now tied with Stephen King as my favorite author. Really!

This tome follows *The Five* — an independent rock band — on the road during the final weeks. They are unsuccessful and financially strained; two members are taking flight and the future is uncertain. A chance interview leads to the band being stalked. Horror (and success) soon unfolds.

I liked this book, though admittedly not as much as I thought I would. Mister McCammon has said he feels this is his best book, and I just respectfully disagree. The 'villain' feels a little too 2-D for my tastes, and the supernatural elements are a bit haphazard, shoehorned in. And I do feel the story has a little too much junk in the trunk; I found myself skimming some, especially on toward the end.

That said, I did like the core cast of characters — especially Nomad and Ariel. They are some of McCammon's finest creations. His character developmental skills are on full display in this hefty book. I could have spent more time with them, even.

McCammon can't write a bad book. Though this one does have faults, I did enjoy the ride. Being the music lover I am, *The Five* hit a lot of the right notes. You can't ask for much more than that.

P.T. says

The Five is the story of a rock band consisting of five people. They're called The Five. They embark on their final tour, first touring through the hell of knowing that the band's career is doomed, then soon realizing that their lives are doomed too. Ultimately it's a story about music's role in the eternal struggle between light and dark, life and death, good and evil. In that spirit, here's the good and the bad:

The Good:

The music: McCammon clearly has a passion for rock and roll. Not just the music itself, but the culture of it, the life of a musician, the meaning behind it all. That shines through on every page. From the dozens of fake band names to the cheesy lyrics of entirely fictional songs, *The Five* will make you love music even more.

The subtlety. Those expecting a balls-out supernatural horror novel will be disappointed. The supernatural is there, but barely; like a whispered background vocal that only comes through when all the other instruments momentarily fade. It comes dangerously close to religious mumbo jumbo at times, but never quite crosses that line enough to ruin it.

The ending. It just hits all the right emotional notes.

The Bad:

The omniscience: Maybe only because it's so uncommon these days, but I find omniscient narration jarring. One paragraph it's inside one character's head, the next paragraph it's onto another character's thoughts, not so much as a scene break between them. I thought the purpose may have been to emphasize that the whole band was the main character, all so deeply interconnected that the story was told from their collective perspective (there's a band name, *Collective Perspective*). Except then the point of view changes to a random character standing in the background, so, not so much.

The length: If *The Five* were an album, it would be half filler songs. The self-indulgent ballads that had to be there to get the album up to twelve songs despite only having six good ones. Except it's a book, so there's no hitting fast forward when you get to a whole page describing a minor side character's living room furniture.

When it ends, *The Five* is, like the song that apparently inspired it, a bitter sweet symphony. It's ultimately satisfying, but there's a lot of boring making ends meet and being a slave to money before getting to the fun dying part.

[Originally posted on Phronk.com]

Lou says

The song track 'Highway to Hell' by AC/DC comes to mind and as I am singing this chorus I think of the band featured in this novel *The Five* and their very rocky journey in a kind of hellish circumstances. This is an excellent rock and roller story that is fully of high quality storytelling that should be absorbed in small doses. Within you will find characters that have some good old rock and roll demeanour with some darkness. Writing with a quality of excellence that really makes you forget time and feel that you want the story to be even more longer.

The five are about to be catapulted to stardom due to unconventional occurrences, that they could never fathom to occur. They find that hits of their YouTube views and other media outlets rise due to a death toll rise.

This story does cover a lot to do with rock and roll and all that comes with it and also you will find the story covers a journey of resolution and discovery. The author Robert hits the cords right and strings out a melody that touches the heart with themes of pain, loss and survival.

He really is an masterful writer and communicates here about the horrors of war, the delight of human struggle and the love of music.

This novel would definitely appeal even more to fans of music bands, artists and also veterans of war. Without giving too much away there is an element to this story, that Robert is known for, involving that which the human eye cannot see.

Due to the length of the novel and a band being the main feature of the story, at first I was wondering how he was going to make it an interesting read. Once I started and embarked upon this journey of The Five I was really in praise of awesomeness!

Definitely one to remember, that lurks behind in the mind for a time.

"He is proficient with his rifle, but a pistol is a different animal. You have to be close. You can easily miss with a pistol, unless you're really close. He has always thought of a pistol as a defensive weapon, a rifle as offensive."

"Business was booming among this demographic. He saw blue,red and purple flames tattooed on bald heads. He saw faces transformed into Escher artwork. He saw the calligraphy of a hundred hues written across shoulders and chest and breasts and stomachs, each man and woman their own Book of Life. Here, dancing and capering, was a bearded figure whose original colt of birthflesh had disappeared beneath the new skin f blue ink and black proclamations; there whirling 'round and 'round was a topless female with red pigtails and an intricate painting of a multicoloured dragon clinging to her back, its arms extending down across her shoulders and the black tails of its claws circling her nipples. Technicolor serpents coiled around throats, arms, thighs and calves. Flowers grew from navels and foreheads were crowned by shooting stars and pentagrams. Marilyn Monroe, Charlie Chaplin, Alice Cooper and Hitler pushed their faces forth from sweat-glistening meat. And there in the crowd...and there...and over there....stood in this blur of constant motion the few motionless figures who stood staring at the performers on the stage with eyes in a visage no longer recognisable as being earthly; they were creations from another realm, a strange and frightening beauty of human matter craved upon and recoloured by needles both the insane and awesome. The was a face made of layered scales like the gray hide of a desert lizard; there was a face created from a dozen interlocking other faces like a grotesque human jigsaw puzzle; and there was the face that was none at all, but rather a pair of eyes, nostrils and a mouth suspended against a bruised-coloured, crackled parchment of indecipherable markings. It seemed to Nomad to be a document of rage."

Review also featured here.

Visit my webpage to read the interview during March 2012 >>>><http://more2read.com/review/interview-with-robert-r-mccammon/>

Kealan Burke says

I have always maintained that no book Robert McCammon could write would ever compete with my favorite of his works, Boy's Life. I read that when I was a teenager, a time when I very much needed to hear it's

message. Well, I can't compare that novel to *The Five*, which, although there are definite similarities, are very different creatures, but I will say that *The Five* is a work of astonishing power and indeed had a similar effect on me as *Boy's Life* did, only twenty years later.

The premise is deceptively simple: A struggling rock band, laboring along on the last few dates of their cross-country tour, in what will most likely be their last time together as a band, come to the attention of an unstable and murderous war veteran who believes the *The Five*'s latest music video gleefully disrespects everything he, and his fellow soldiers, have fought and died for.

Inspired by a strange encounter during a stop on the road, Nomad (John Charles), the angst-ridden and haunted lead singer of the band, decides that, as it's clear the band will be no more once the tour is done (thanks to the announcement by both their manager and keyboardist that they're moving on to other pursuits), they should write one final song together. Somewhat unenthusiastically, the band agrees, but it soon becomes apparent that the song-in-progress has a lot more significance than they realize, and that forces are amassing in an effort to prevent its completion.

To label *The Five* a thriller is to do it an injustice, because it is so much more than that. And although it does contain the necessary elements of a chase story, the true power of the novel lies in its exploration of themes that are as old as time and as omnipresent in our lives as the air we breathe. It's a love letter to music, a study of faith and the human spirit, of darkness and light. It's an odyssey through life and all it would have us celebrate and endure. It's about friendship and fear, courage and cowardice. It's about magic, and destiny, the power of music, and the impact our choices may have on others, whether we realize it or not. It's about people, the good, the bad, and the lost.

It's about us.

And it is one of the best books I've ever had the pleasure to read.

So, Kudos, Mr. McCammon. Just like *The Five*'s "New Old World", I think this book was the song you were meant to write. And what an incredible song it is.

Note: Special mention should go to Vincent Chong for the amazing artwork, which completely nails the tone and spirit of the book.

Chris says

Robert McCammon has long been one of my favorite horror authors ever since I picked up *Swan Song* way back in the late 80's, and have utterly been a fan since. When he veered off straight-out horror into thriller territory with novels like *Mine* and *Going South*, he continued to enthrall his loyal readers with his immense talent. Then years later came his first in the Matthew Corbett novels, which blend the supernatural thriller with early American history, and followed by several more in the series. What else can he do? *The Five*. Well-crafted, dark and brooding, brutally unrelenting but full of heart, the novel follows a rock and roll band of less than moderate success, suddenly thrust into the limelight after being stalked by a damaged war veteran. (Some spoilers ahead!) Still reeling after the sniper death of a fellow bandmate, followed by the near death of their manager, the band nearly breaks up...but is convinced by an FBI agent to continue their tour, so that they can lure the assassin into a trap. But can they survive to see the killer stopped before he executes another band member? Can *The Five* survive each other?

Tinges of the supernatural are at work in this masterful work, those angels and demons, but in a subtle way, and McCammon poses some intriguing moral questions without being preachy or political. The Five rocks it hard, and highly recommended!

Debra says

Stephen King says: "The Five isn't just Robert McCammon's best novel in years; it's his best novel ever. Terrifying, suspenseful, unputdownable, and full of rock and roll energy. It's also uplifting, a book you'll finish feeling better about your world, your friends, and your music. Here's one you'll beg friends to read."

He also said this: "One of the finest horror-suspense writers of the late '70s and '80s returns with a riveting novel of a rock band (the Five) pursued by a mentally unstable Army vet who's offended by one of their videos. It's scary; it's also a soaring anthem to the redemptive power of rock & roll. You probably won't find it in your bookstore, so go to your (hopefully nonmalevolent) computer and click on subterraneanpress.com."

8/6/12 - Loved this book. McCammon is such an amazing writer. I was first introduced to McCammon when I read *Swan Song* and claimed it to be as great as King's *The Stand*. I've followed McCammon ever since and have never been disappointed. *The Five* is a must for music lovers of all ages; great characters, steady suspense, some supernatural elements to mess with your head a bit. I didn't want to put it down!

Char says

I just finished reading *The Five* over the weekend. I'm not ashamed to say that there were tears in my eyes as I did so.

I really loved this book. Anyone who has ever felt like a song was actually written for them or is speaking to them personally would like this book.

I am not going to get into the plot line as everyone else already has. Suffice it to say that by the 3rd or 4th chapter I was completely engaged with these well developed characters and I truly cared about what would happen to them. To me, that is the sign of a great writer. The characters also grew and developed throughout the entire book-a few of them were completely different people by the end. No cardboard characters here. As with "*Swan Song*" these characters will be with me for a long time and "they will be heard".

Randolph says

Decent but ultimately drawn out slightly supernatural character driven thriller that in the end doesn't hold up the contrived plot and the weighty length of the novel. This is obviously a labor of love for McCammon but he just doesn't quite get his enthusiasm across. Character is everything here so making characters we care about is essential and McCammon is hit or miss in *The Five*. The only really well drawn character is Nomad. The rest range from just alright to cardboard. It's also just too easy to see who is going to take the next bullet because of this.

McCammon also tries to cram too many types into the band in his quest to play homage to all the eclectic music he likes so there's a hippie, a rocker, prog. rock type, etc. He wants to be so inclusive he creates a band that could never be real, would never have cohered. You just don't quite believe it when they say they've got

each other's backs.

The mystical healing power of music is overwrought and the author keeps pummelling the reader with it long after its effectiveness is lost and the novel should have ended.

I didn't hate this; it did drag at times and I couldn't believe it when the end wasn't the end.

A cool idea, a story about a band hounded by a maniac, just doesn't quite make it when you try to stuff all your favorite things in it as well.
