



City of Saviors

Rachel Howzell Hall

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Los Angeles Homicide Detective Elouise Norton encounters her toughest case yet in *City of Saviors*, the fourth installment in the critically acclaimed mystery series from author Rachel Howzell Hall.

After a long Labor Day weekend, seventy-three-year-old Eugene Washington is found dead in his Leimert Park home. At first blush, his death seems unremarkable?heatwave combined with food poisoning from a holiday barbecue. But something in the way Washington died doesn't make sense. LAPD Homicide Detective Elouise "Lou" Norton is called to investigate the death and learns that the only family Washington had was the 6,000-member congregation of Blessed Mission Ministries, led by Bishop Solomon Tate.

But something wicked is lurking among the congregants of this church.

Lou's partner, Detective Colin Taggart, thinks her focus on the congregation comes from her distrust of organized religion. But Lou is convinced that the murderer is sitting in one of those red velvet pews?and that Bishop Tate may be protecting the wolf in the flock. Lou must force the truth into the light and confront her own demons in order to save another soul before it's too late.

City of Saviors Details

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From Reader Review City of Saviors for online ebook

Sarah says

I discovered this series about a year ago and have finally made it through all four books...and I want more! This is one of my favorite contemporary mystery series right now and it's just SO good. I'm excited to read Rachel Howzell Hall's new standalone book next year, but I sure hope we get to see more of Lou after that.

This installment of the series starts with the death of a man during a heat wave. He's old and he's a hoarder and it's not even clear that it's a murder at first. But as Lou and Colin start to dig, the story gets dark and convoluted with some very WTF revelations about the victim's life. Throughout all this, Lou kids dealing with PTSD following the events of the last book, as well as drama with her ex and her father, and the fact that she can't get deeper into her relationship with Sam, lest he appear to have a conflict of interest in the case he's on.

In every one of these reviews, I gush about how much I love Lou, and every book just keeps getting better. I won't rehash everything I love about her, but the things that really bring me back to mystery series are the characters, and Lou is one of the best. Her voice is incredibly compelling--the author has done such a great job writing her, and I hope we see more of her very soon. I highly recommend this series to all fans of police procedurals, but start at the beginning, as each story builds off the last one.

Columbus says

This is the 4th and most recent book in the Elouise Norton crime series. Detective, no, now Sergeant Lou Norton is working the streets of Los Angeles busting heads while solving crime.

This was my least favorite of the books thus far. A large chunk of this focused on her personal life and while that's not necessarily a bad thing, the story seemed to repeat itself and not advance forward. Hopefully if there's a book 5 in the series it'll be better.

2.5 stars

Lisachinnery says

Lou is back!!! She is wounded after catching her last killer but pushing through in true Lou fashion. In this fourth installment, we continue to really get to know Lou. She is a little like all of us when we have work to do, we push through and get it done. She's got a murderer to catch. This time it isn't a missing child but another vulnerable member of our society who is preyed upon by those who should be helping and not profiting. There are plenty of twists and turns to keep the pages turning. It is great to see Lou advancing in her profession against some stacked odds and resistance by her peers, standing her ground where she can and giving in when she must. In the end, as always, we are rooting for Lou to find peace within herself, real love and ultimately her health.

If you are in Denver, Rachel will be at the Tattered Cover on Colfax on August 27th at 2pm

Lynn says

Lou is a great kickass character but she is gravely wounded at the end of book 3. In this followup, she's back on the job too soon and a bit shaky. This book revealed genuine character development and struggle. A great book even with less action and a slightly diminished (and vulnerable) hero.

Nakia says

This installment of the Detective Elouise Norton series gave me the heebie jeebies in more ways than one. Lou also started to get on my nerves, but that is mostly because anyone who is physically hurt but refusing to take care of themselves by sitting down somewhere, grinds my gears.

The book starts off with Lou emerging from a terrible car crash in which she almost died. She's been promoted, and some people are not happy about taking orders from a Black woman, which fuels her desire to keep up her hustle, even though she hasn't yet fully healed from her accident. Dying or suffering from a preventative medical issue because you're trying to prove a point to people who don't give a damn about you is not cute and very annoying.

Outside of that, I enjoyed this as much as the other three installments and I'm sad there are no more to pick up to continue the series.

Ariel says

frustrated sigh

Listen, I really love this series. It's interesting, gritty, and I can relate to Lou on a personal level. I love that when I'm reading this, I don't think of her as a character.

This book is my favorite of the series so far and I hope it's continued. After the events of the last book, if Lou didn't have PTSD, I would have stopped reading and never picked it up again. I was *shown* that she was having a hard time. I was *shown* that she's still battling racism and sexism and I can relate to that being a black woman in a white male dominated field myself. I fell deeply in love with this series for that exact reason: Show, not tell.

Know what I *wasn't* shown that keeps being pushed? These feelings Lou and Sam supposedly have for each other. Even when Sam was featured in the last book, he didn't have a personality outside of being a potential LI for Lou. Know what I *was* shown? Colin supporting Lou when people she's known longer didn't. I was shown them taking care of each other even when they didn't like each other very much in the moment. I was shown their respect for each other increasing as they navigated the personal and the professional. I was shown Lou paying attention to who Colin flirts with and who he wears a shirt to try to impress. I was shown Colin and Lou being vulnerable with each other. I was shown Lou and Colin being in love with each other and as oblivious to that as the sun is bright.

So, no. I'm not buying that she wants Sam. That she needs Sam as her friends keep telling her. As she keeps telling herself. Nope.

Renee says

Just. So. Good.

Especially for those of us mourning Sue Grafton, this is a great series. You don't HAVE TO start at the beginning of the series. But I would (and I did).

Melissa says

A pure distillation of everything that makes Elouise Norton books great - all of the sass and the sincerity, all of the darkness and all of the heart. This is nearly perfect, both laugh out loud funny and creepy as all hell.

Eric says

City of Saviors is the fourth book by Rachel Howzell Hall involving homicide Det. Elouise Norton and returning characters of the Los Angeles Police Department.

Norton has now been promoted to a detective sergeant, allowing Hall to weave this change into the story to bring additional layers to her story telling. Norton's promotion, along with other issues, bring new complexities to the life of the lead character.

In this novel, the tale starts with the investigation into the death of an elderly man. Some believe it was either an accidental or natural death. The investigation of the hoarder slowly develops, with Norton being forced to persuade others of her gut instincts that this is more than an accident or mere food poisoning.

Along the way, Norton is forced to deal with skeptical co-workers and bosses and even her own partner, Colin Taggart. Norton is also facing personal health issues and other conflicts in her life, while Hall has allowed her to keep her humor.

When it comes to the dialog in her novels, one thing I enjoy about Hall's writing is how, just as in real life, she doesn't always make exactly clear what full intentions are meant in conversations between characters.

In her Norton novels, she has also allowed her main character to grow and has not created characters that are not believable or in the possession of superhuman skills.

This is an interesting series that includes gender, racial and office issues, but not in a overly distracting way that allows Hall to tell her stories while keep the reader interested and looking forward to her next novel.

I forgot to add - each time I read a book in this series, my mind's eye pictures the great, underrated actress

Michael Hyatt (Brianna Barksdale from *The Wire*) as Elouise Norton and the actor Chris Evans (Captain America) as Colin Taggart.

Highly recommended, especially to fans of Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch series.

Mary says

But, but, where's the next one? I need more!
So good. Want to know what happened the next day. Now!

The CurvyJones says

Absolutely perfect.

I love love love me some Sergeant Lou Norton! She's like a Timex... takes a licking and keeps on ticking!
This book was so worth the wait. Fabulous job, Ms. Hall!

Michael Martz says

'City of Saviors' is Rachel Howzell Hall's latest crime novel starring homicide detective Eloise 'Lou' Norton. It's a competently executed 'whodunnit & why' with an interesting twist at the end. Lest you miss the constant reminders throughout the story (and all previous ones in the stack as well), Lou is African-American.

It begins with a 'hoarder' found dead in his severely overstuffed home. It appears to be by natural causes, but something doesn't look right to the detectives so they begin to poke around. What appears to be a fairly straightforward investigation in the beginning quickly morphs into something much messier, as the victim's strange eating habits and other anomalies pop up. In the midst of all this, Lou continues to have physical problems related to her last case that threaten to limit or stop her participation in the activity. Throw in a megachurch, various other parties interested in what the police are finding, and internecine conflict among the investigators and it becomes a tough nut to crack. They eventually figure it out, though, and Lou's able to take some time off to mend herself.

On the plus side, the writing is competent. The dialogue varies, though, with some passages being spot on and others rather stilted. The Colin character isn't portrayed as being quite as clueless as in previous novels in the series, although his hinted-at romantic interest in one of the women under investigation didn't make a lot of sense and was never resolved. The plot at a high level was pretty interesting, but I had a few minor quibbles with some of the investigatory work and the sort of rush at the end to wrap things up. It's a nice mystery but not a whole lot of explanation of what ended up to be a very complicated affair at the end.

Tina says

[cannibalism (hide spoiler)]

Audrey says

3.5 stars.

Another solid entry to this newish series. I really appreciate the author's efforts in conveying the difficulties that Sgt. Elouise Norton has with her struggles in race and gender within the LAPD. And trying to hide her ptsd while juggling a really icky case and knowing that there is some sort of underlying issue at work. I also liked her support system. The case itself, while a solid procedural, was slightly predictable. There were some steps that I'm surprised that the detectives didn't first pursue.

Valarie says

Rachel Hall has to be my favorite AA female author of mystery right now. And she did not disappoint in the 4th installment of the Elouise Norton novels. The only complaint I have is that there are not enough titles by her (Rachel) yet. I'm a fan of all of her works , even the first book I read years ago. I can say if you enjoyed the first three, you'll like this one. If you haven't read her other titles do yourself a favor and do so.
