



In this Rain

S.J. Rozan

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Three years ago, a child's death blew open a vortex of corruption inside Manhattan's lucrative construction industry. And it sent one innocent man to jail. Joe Cole is a former city investigator who now lives a broken life, cut off from his wife and daughter, and from the city he once knew so well. But for Joe, everything changes when a woman's murder and a teenager's rooftop freefall rip open old wounds—and reveal a shocking layer of rage and deception.

It is Joe's former partner, beautiful, hard-charging investigator Ann Montgomery, who first sees the lies, forcing Joe out of his self-imposed isolation to help her unravel the cover-ups and secret relationships that allow the powerful to hide their crimes. Soon, the two are entering the darkest corners of their city, delving into the hidden desires of a borough president who wants to be mayor, the motivations of a charismatic community activist, and the machinations of a mayor whose ambitions know no bounds. As the secrets of each player are exposed, as the primal forces of greed, sex, and power come to the surface, Ann and Joe know they must press their search all the way to the end—because the most powerful revelations are yet to come.

From a brilliantly choreographed press conference to a scandalous love affair gone terribly wrong, **In This Rain** takes us into the heart of a sprawling, brawling city—in a masterpiece of suspense that proves once again the unique and daring genius of S. J. Rozan.

From the Hardcover edition.

In this Rain Details

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From Reader Review In this Rain for online ebook

Richard Thompson says

Not a Chin/Smith mystery this one.

Ann Montgomery is an investigator for the DOI (Department of Investigations) in New York, an agency described as the Internal Affairs Division for the whole city. One of their main remits is policing and investigating practices in the development and construction of large real estate projects. Anne is assigned the job of investigating an unusual series of what are either accidents or instances of sabotage at a project in the Bronx.

A large cast of characters including Hizzoner the Mayor, the Bronx Borough President, a charismatic black social activist in Harlem, several other member of the DOI, Anne's former DOI partner who has just been released from prison (having been used as a sacrificial goat in a previous building related scandal) and a rich developer who is angling to make his mark as one of the Big Boys... The view point switches quickly between the players and it takes a while to figure out how things fit together. Then you find out that things actually DON'T fit together that way...

Well put together and compelling.

Maggee speculated that Rozan might have been contemplating a new series, but so far this looks like a stand-alone.

Rozan is definitely the major "find" in this reading year. STONE QUARRY and ABSENT FRIENDS are on the pile waiting to be read.

Bronwyn Rykier says

This was a well constructed story about corruption inside Manhattan's lucrative construction industry. There were lots of surprises and the story was tied up very well. I did have trouble in the beginning because there seemed to be a lot of characters but by the end they it all fell together.

Joe Cole, a former employee of "DOI" (New York Department of Investigation), has recently been released from prison after serving a three year sentence; he was convicted after a child was killed on a site that he was responsible for checking.

Joe's former partner Anne Montgomery has been called back to town after languishing in a backwater position, to look into the death of a woman who was hit by flying debris from a building site. Joe had been Ann's mentor and she goes to him for help, forcing him out of his self-imposed isolation to help her unravel the cover-ups and secret relationships that allow the powerful to hide their crimes. They tie the murder of a teenager who fell from a rooftop and a man he had been working for, who is also murdered, to the corruption.

John F Anderson says

Great Story - Great Storyteller

well crafted and fully fleshed, with people you can believe in, and a play of light and darkness that resonates.

Peggy says

I listened to this book. The narrator is Susan Ericksen and she is exceptional - she does an excellent job of changing her voice for the various characters - from black gang bangers, to Bronx New York accent, to high society New York, to the Hispanic male NYPD detective. She puts so much emotion to her reading that it comes alive. The story is about corruption, ambition, and murder involving building contracts in New York. This is a stand alone novel. The characters were complex and well thought out and the plot also complex and satisfying.

Ali says

Good mystery novel with lots of fun twists; I saw some of them coming, but they still managed to keep me interested.

My biggest problem with this book was that it didn't always ring true. I'm able to suspend disbelief about the plot elements (the almost Dickensian connections between people, the intricate plans), but City government didn't quite work or sound right. I'm still giving it four stars, though, because I think I would've felt differently had the book taken place in Chicago or LA or somewhere other than New York. But given that it takes place in a world I'm pretty familiar with, I found the times when Rozan gets things wrong to be distracting.

Quillracer says

Rozan threw lots of characters at the reader in the first few chapters, making it hard to keep them straight. That she gave no description of them – only names – made it harder. As a result, the main characters – Anna Montgomery and Joe Cole – got lost among this deluge of people when they should have stood out.

The story felt scattered and choppy, as if Rozan just wrote it down as it came to her with no attempt to make it flow. Narration drifting willy-nilly between story and backstory only made the scattered, choppy feel worse. The story opens with a murder that disappears until it suddenly surfaces 60% of the book later, when Rozan reveals the victim is a close friend of one of the main characters.

Dialog between some of the characters was so cryptic in places that even three or four readings didn't make what's actually being said clear. Such dialog may be realistic but when it leaves the reader scratching his or her head (as it does here), it doesn't work.

There was no tension in this book. It was just the characters doing the same things and making the same

mistakes over and over as the story ambled through almost 400 pages to a whimper of an ending.

I won't be back for any more S. J. Rozan books.

Jon says

Liked this one much better than the Lydia Chin series. Was misled by the prologue and first chapter into thinking it was going to be just another woman-in-jeopardy thing; but it turned out to be much more complex and interesting than that. Great local color for NYC--I imagine that's the way politics really works there--and an ending I didn't see coming.

Maddy says

PROTAGONIST: Ann Montgomery, Department of Investigations investigator

SETTING: New York City

SERIES: Standalone

RATING: 2.75

S. J. Rozan has received much acclaim as the author of the Lydia Smith and Bill Chin crime fiction series. In the past few years, Rozan has branched out from that series and begun to write standalone books. The first, *ABSENT FRIENDS*, was an homage to the City That Never Sleeps after 9/11. The second, *IN THIS RAIN*, focuses on graft and corruption in the construction industry in New York City. As an architect, Rozan has the background in the design of buildings and their construction that makes this work utterly believable.

A few years ago, an investigator in the Department of Investigations, Joe Cole, was sentenced to several years in prison for his supposed role in a construction scam. Obviously the fall guy for those in power, Joe is now out of prison and reestablishing his life in an enclave outside the City. He's taken on a low-key job and invests himself in gardening on a massive scale. But he's not being given the luxury of maintaining that quiet life. His former partner, Ann Montgomery has been assigned to a very puzzling case. She needs Joe's expertise to help her figure out if there's any funny business going on. At first, she seems an odd choice to lead the investigation, as she has been on the outs within her own department for quite some time. But there's a reason for the choice, as becomes all too clear as the book progresses.

There have been three incidents at the Mott Haven construction site, one of which was a death caused by bricks falling from the roof of the structure. The developer of the buildings is a mogul by the name of Walter Glybenhall. It's unclear whether he has arranged to have these mishaps occur so that he can collect the insurance or whether someone is sabotaging his site so that he will not be allowed to take on a very lucrative new venture in Harlem. As Ann investigates, she uncovers corruption at the deepest levels, including well-regarded community figures and powerful politicos. But due to her own stubbornness and lack of flexibility, it all blows up in her face. Is there any chance for the truth to come out when the most influential citizens can so easily cover things up?

The plot premise is excellent—the way that Ann is led astray as a result of her own deficiencies is cruel but brilliant. Unfortunately, that premise is buried in a plot of Byzantine proportions. The way that Rozan structures the book is to devote individual chapters to each of the multiple plot threads, and then wander

between the threads. Especially in the opening chapters, I felt completely lost as a story was presented and insufficient background provided to establish what was going on, who each of the characters were and exactly how all of this connected to the main narrative. Just as you'd get involved in one of the situations, you'd be thrown over to another one. It was very difficult for me to follow what was going on. The fact that most of the chapters were very short, some only containing a paragraph or two, also contributed to making the reading quite choppy. I plead guilty to being a linear reader. A more straightforward approach to the plot would have made the book hold together better for me.

In addition, there was a huge cast, and it was impossible to keep the players straight. Again, the characters were introduced with very minimal background provided. There were quite a few variations on the same character. There were at least 4 or 5 community and political leaders involved in the story, several shady-feeling law authority types, a few gang members, and so on. In spite of the fact that so much was going on, the characters seemed rather flat to me. Nominally the lead in the book, Ann wasn't particularly engaging. In fact, she does some remarkably stupid things that put her in danger.

The setting, of course, is impeccably rendered. Rozan might write a book without Lydia Chin or Bill Smith, but I cannot imagine her writing a book set anywhere other than New York (side visits to China an exception). It's clear that she has a love affair with this metropolis; it's clear that she understands every nuance of the people that live there, whether they be the ordinary citizen or a person in power.

Overall, the book was a disappointment for me. It feels to me that when Rozan is writing her standalone books, she is consciously creating very complex plots with a large cast of characters. I would never sentence such a fine author to having to write her wonderful Chin/Smith series for the rest of her life. However, I would love to see her take what works in those books and create a standalone that is painted on a much smaller palette than *ABSENT FRIENDS* or *IN THIS RAIN*. What's missing in these two books is the sense of humanity that comes from concentrating on building deep and rich characterizations of a few people who speak to our hearts. I know for a fact that Rozan can do that well—it just didn't happen in this book.

Jessica says

This book was completely predictable. From the beginning, I knew who the bad guy was and there really weren't any surprises along the way. The author tried to throw a little twist right at the end, but it was way too late for that. Also the language was completely terrible. I really shouldn't have even finished the book (not worth my time) but I am such a sucker; once I start reading a mystery I have to know what happens. I am a mystery-writer's dream I guess.

Ronald Wise says

A fast-paced mystery/thriller with complex, multi-faceted schemes at play. This story's plausibility was weakened, though, due to the exaggerated personalities and behaviors of many of its major characters. The verisimilitude of the hedonism and brashness of the New York power brokers portrayed in this book may be on the increase, however, in light of current developments in Washington, D.C., concerning a real New York real estate mogul mentioned two or three times in this book – Donald Trump. Yes.... there seem to be real

people just like that.

OMalleycat says

This book is definitely hard to get into and perhaps that colored my final opinion. Multiple viewpoints in separate chapters beginning with the first page mean that no character is fully introduced so the reader is dropped into a complicated story of politics, real estate development, city inspections, and murder. I wanted to like the book which has Rozan's usual cast of vivid characters, but it just seemed like so much work to read it.

Barbara ★ says

All about corruption and kick backs in Harlem New York. Book has meeting after meeting with the mayor, council members, cops, building inspectors, etc. and whose ass is on the line when accidents happen and people die. Add to this bundle of happiness, a religious fervor (a preacher and some do-gooder) and I called it quits at page 50. I just couldn't take the political maneuverings and the b.s. Found this book boring as hell.

Jackie says

S.J. Rozan is an amazing author... in every book she writes, usually in the first chapter or two, is a grabber description that is so evocative and transfixing that I become committed to reading the entire book, even if it doesn't interest me that much. This book is no exception. I read Rozan's books because she is so great at dialogue, at creating memorable characters, at intelligent description and thought. That said, she writes mysteries, not the gorey thriller kind, not the funny cozy kind; but the kind that creates a mood and an outlook that lingers after the book is done.

LJ says

IN THIS RAIN (Licensed Investigator-New York City-Cont) – VG

Rozan, S.J. – Standalone

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First Sentence: “It surprised him, how light she was.”

*** Joe Cole, is newly paroled and just wants to lead a quiet life after having been wrongfully imprisoned for a child's death near a construction site. Joe's former partner in the New York Department of Investigation, Ann Montgomery, has been languishing in a backwater position but has now been moved front-and-center. A new construction site accident results in a death, a teenager falls off a rooftop and sabotage on sites make Ann suspicious. With a major who wants to be Governor, a community activity who wants the best for his people, and a borough president who wants to be major, there is a lot at stake for a development under construction and a piece of property everyone wants even at the price of murder.

*** Rozan knows how to take the reader on a curvy, suspenseful ride. As with Ann, every time you think you know where the story is going, the direction changes. Rozan also knows how to take two seemingly unconnected threads and twist them together into a suspenseful, intriguing story. I appreciate her ability to

have a strong male and female protagonist, yet let the female take the lead without dimensioning the role of the male. Rozen makes the people and the city of New York come alive. This was a very good, one-sitting suspenseful read.

Susan says

This book is quite convincing that being mayor of New York City is an impossible job. Mayor Charlie Barr is juggling politicians, community leaders, financial backers, and his ambitious wife. While he is surrounded by corruption, Charlie makes an attempt at being reasonably ethical. So when an accident takes a life at a construction site, he sends in Ann Montgomery, his most aggressive investigator. Ann seeks help from her former partner, recently paroled Joe Cole, who took the fall for a previous construction site accident. Together, Ann and Joe are the perfect balance of yin and yang. Unfortunately, neither of them separately is very likeable. Ann is vengeful and obnoxious. Joe is stubbornly passive, interested only in his garden. Although the plot is satisfyingly complex, their personalities keep the pace of the story a little plodding.
