



Frank-3 Enroute: The Call

Rod Harris

Norma Hood

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A tough-as-nails cop with a heart of gold metes out justice in gritty Las Vegas.

“What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas” is a promise certainly not kept in *Frank-3 Enroute: The Call*, part of the highly charged series by authors Rod Harris and Norma Hood. The city’s underbelly—comprised of the lascivious, the mundane, and the sorrowful—continues to be explored by seasoned cop Rod “The Hawk” Randel and his compatriots in crime fighting.

In keeping with the format of the series, each chapter focuses on a new situation in which Randel is typically the responding officer. The police department’s new edict, issued by the sheriff, is that the streets are to be cleaned up, and prostitution is one of the first vices that needs to go. Several situations from earlier in the series are circled back upon; the satisfaction gained from the follow-up and resolution to these cases is immense.

A large, interesting, but sometimes unwieldy list of characters can at times feel difficult to keep straight. Most chapters introduce criminals, and some introduce new objects of Randel’s flirtations, from waitresses to nurses. Randel’s relationships with women, even with his most important lady-friend, Cheyenne, sometimes come across as superficial, and mostly increase the bravado of already ultra-macho Randel.

Randel’s characterization, that of a tough-guy cop with a heart of gold, does indeed shine forth. In one particularly poignant scene, Randel is called in to rescue an elderly woman horrifically neglected and abused by her caregiver. The officer’s tenderness toward the victim is in complete contrast to his treatment of the evil guardian. Likewise, when Randel encounters a young woman found running naked down a highway, clearly also the victim of abuse and under the influence of drugs, his ability to think quickly in order to do what is best for a person in the throes of deep pain is obvious.

While there is a feeling of gratification in the treatment of the criminals in Randel’s Las Vegas, at the same time there is also an element of disbelief that this officer seems to be able to mete out his own justice, time and again, without any serious repercussions. That said, the stable characters, including Randel’s fellow officers Sam “Grumpy” Sikes and Kimmie “Roscoe” Love, help to pull the chapters into a more cohesive whole and to provide depth to the overall arc of the storytelling.

The vernacular employed throughout adds a feeling of authenticity to this police-world novel. Harris’s many years of experience as an officer in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department come in handy in this respect. While there are some very minor typos in the book, they in no way impede the enjoyment or readability of this well-paced story.

Frank-3 Enroute: The Call is an exciting and adventure-filled read that offers a gritty look at the world of policing through a tough-as-nails lead character who is impossible to forget.

TRACY FISCHER (February 1, 2016)

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