



## Hell Gate

*Linda Fairstein , Barbara Rosenblat (narrator)*

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New York City politics have always been filled with intrigue and behind-the-scenes deals. In *Hell Gate*, Alex finds her attention torn between investigating a shipwreck that has contraband cargo-human cargo-and the political sex scandal of a promising New York congressman now fallen from grace. When Alex discovers that a woman from the wreck and the congressman's lover have the same rose tattoo-the brand of a "snakehead", a master of a human trafficking operation-it dawns on her that these cases aren't as unrelated as they seem and that the entire political landscape of New York City could hang in the balance of her investigation. As Alex looks on at the nameless victims in the morgue, she realizes she's looking at the present-day face of New York's long, dark tradition of human trafficking-a tradition that began hundreds of years ago with slave trade from Africa, now a multimillion-dollar industry that will stop at no cost, even if that cost is Alex's life.

## Hell Gate Details

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# From Reader Review Hell Gate for online ebook

## Cecilyn says

Love these books. Loved learning about the Gracie Mansion and Hell Gate.

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## Lelah says

I really like this series, it's exciting and fun to read, since each one focuses on a different New York City historical landmark, or sometimes an aspect of New York City history. Hell Gate was an interesting addition to the series, focusing on human trafficking and Manhattan's Federalist-era mansions. However, if Alexandra and Mike do not so much as kiss in the next book, I might have to start boycotting the series. Come on! They are perfect for each other and the author has kept them scrupulously apart for 12 whole books!

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## Jenny says

Hell Gate is number 12 in the Alexandra Cooper series written by Linda Fairstein. Alexandra Cooper is the Assistance District Attorney for Manhattan and with Detectives Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace. In Hell Gate Alexandra, Mike and Mercer investigate the death of a young girl who was washed up onto land after a migrants boat capsized in the Manhattan Harbour. Readers of Hell Gate will follow the twist and turns of Alex, Mercer and Mike investigation and if you are scarce of heights, you will feel for Alex at the end of this book.

I have read other books by Linda Fairstein, and I have enjoyed them. However, Hell Gate was a little bit slow for me. I did enjoy the way Linda Fairstein portrays her characters especially Alex, Mercer and Mike. At times I laugh with the way the Alex, Mercer and Mike interact with each other.

Readers of Hell Gate will also learn about human trafficking and the consequence for everyone involved. Hell Gate also highlights what can happen to congressman's that fall into the hands of the wrong people.

I recommend this book.

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## Susanhayeshotmail.com says

This may well be my last Fairstein read. I remember enjoying these Alex Cooper mysteries but this time I kept asking myself what was it previously enjoyed so much I would pick up another one. The NYC historic bits were as always interesting, I even looked up the mansions online, interesting stuff. As for the rest, bleh. Too much political tediousness with too many bad guys to keep track of and the almost but never really yet never really not either romance (fauxmance?) between Alex and Mike were just not enough to carry the human trafficking plot. I slogged through, took almost two hundred pages to even get interested and then had to force myself to finish the last chapter, which failed to really fill in much and just kind of stops. Definitely wouldn't recommend it to anyone, there are better books out there that make you actually care about human

trafficking.

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### **Debra says**

Assistant district attorney Alexandra Cooper is called out on a freezing January morning to investigate the body of a young woman washed ashore. The woman is only one of several bodies from a Ukrainian freighter containing 300 illegal aliens, however, this woman was stabbed to death before she hit the water. She also bears the tattoo of someone destined for sexual slavery. Complicating Alexandra's job is the murder of a congressman's mistress who was sporting a similar tattoo. How do these women's lives converge, and who's behind all this misery?

Hell Gate is a complex story about how a little power in the wrong hands can be so dangerous when greed and lust are involved. Author Linda Fairstein expertly weaves the two stories together while throwing in a fair bit historical detail regarding the few mansions still existing in New York. This is the first Fairstein novel I've read and the depth and detail make it a really good read. Those who prefer a lot of action in crime fiction, however, will probably feel bogged down by the eight pages of description for just one mansion. Still, if you enjoy detail and historical facts with your fiction, then you'll enjoy this story.

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### **Petula Darling says**

I found this one thoroughly confusing. I couldn't seem to keep the characters straight despite taking notes. A bigger problem, though, is my increasing dislike for Mike Chapman. I liked him in books #1 and #2, then I had to skip to book #5 when I couldn't find #3 & #4 on audio. Since then, he's been becoming a bigger jerk to Alex with each successive novel, while at the same time it seems as if we're supposed to view him as a potential romantic partner for her. Yick.

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### **Shellye M. says**

One of her less satisfying efforts. Neither of the two intersecting plotlines will hold your interest for long. You'll get a history lesson on Manhattan's Mansions (particularly Gracie Mansion, the Mayor's official residence), and the usual scenes of meals with Mike and Mercer, as well as the Jeopardy final question. There's the obligatory mention of the possible attraction between Chapman and Alexandra Cooper, but it's only a mention, nothing of note. I'll hope for a more compelling mystery in the next work.

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### **Jakob Brønnum says**

I tried, I really did. But when 60% of the female writer's lines consists of men's remarks on the female protagonists clothes and/or body and all the men calls the criminal 'the perp', you'll loose it and be sorry for the sorry act that could have beens such great crime writing by 'the nations leading expert in sexual

violence', a truly promising plot and all

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### **Kendra says**

Book 12 in the Alex Cooper series deals with human trafficking, which I found both sad and interesting. Best part of the book: Fairstein is *finally* devoting a little more time to the Mike/Alex dynamic. Worst part: Alex comes across as wimpy and submissive in this book. Every male she interacts with is condescending toward her -- and I absolutely GET that it happens, believe me, but she could at least act offended and take some action. There is no sense of her as a tough, take-charge prosecutor in this book at all. I've heard Fairstein speak before, and I know she channels herself into Alex, so I found this really puzzling. Overall, though, the story kept me hooked. Fairstein rarely disappoints in that regard (although I stand by previously stated belief that she needs to tone down the NYC history lessons...\*yawn\*)

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### **Kelly says**

Alas another author succumbs to the dread disease "Best Selleritis". My personal phrase for authors who are so intent on staying on top of the best sellers list, they forget how to plot and write a book.

I couldn't even finish the book it was so dreadful. Too much politics, too many names that were close to the same, re-reading pages because I got lost. And to top it all off the villain was SO VERY OBVIOUS when introduced. I read about 1/3 of the book and gave up and read the last chapter.

The plot was beyond stupid with "coincidences". And I just love the blabbing villain scenario to tie up all the loose ends... BOO.

Also of note:.. Ms. Fairstein needs to give up a few standard paragraphs that can be found in EVERY FREAKING BOOK... The "my father the heart surgeon" and the "dead fiance"... Alright already I get it, your wealthy and you lost your first love.

Also the bickering between Chapman and Alex has gotten down right mean. Personally I'd slap the crap out of a friend who talked to me the way he talks to her.

While I recommend her first 8 or so books, the last few have been off. And this one was her worst.

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### **Ausgeoff says**

Having read and enjoyed a few of the previous Alexandra Cooper novels, I was profoundly disappointed with HELL GATE.

A turgid, bifurcated storyline that took far too long to develop any direction; far, far too much trivial detail about the NY mansions, and particularly Gracie Mansion. The historical minutiae may be of interest to native New Yorkers, but to someone like me in the antipodes, it's simply extraneous padding. If I wanted to know anything at all about Gracie Mansion (which I don't) then a quick trip to Wiki would sum up its history up in a couple of pages, rather than Fairstein's dozens.

Like other reviewers, I too was confused by the sheer number of characters, many of whom seemed superfluous to the base plot-line. After a while, I couldn't even remember who they were supposed to be (in relation to the story).

And also as others have said, the banter between Alex and Mike Chapman is becoming increasingly tedious. Can anyone believe that a self-centred chauvinist such as Chapman would get away with his smug, patronising putdowns of Alex at every turn? Surely by now—in the 21st-century—she would've punched his lights out? And as for the silly *Jeopardy* questions; puhleeze! It may have been a clever gimmick for the first few Cooper/Chapman outings, but after 12 books? No way.

I've now read two thirds of the book, and that's it for me. I simply don't have the energy or the will to turn one more page. I'd prefer to watch fence palings warp.

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### **Alex is The Romance Fox says**

The 12th novel in The Alexandra Cooper Series, this is a well-written and taut mystery involving human trafficking, prostitution, corrupt politicians, sex scandals, murder and much more.

The story opens with a Ukrainian ship, carrying human cargo, including young women destined to sexual slavery, runs aground and an up and coming politician who leaves the scene and his mistress, after he had crashed his car.

Alexandra Cooper, Assistant District Attorney and head of New York Special Victims Unit is called to the ship wreck scene, where people had jumped off the ship, and some drowning whilst attempting to swim ashore and. Soon one body did not die from drowning but by murder.

When the politician's mistress is found after being stabbed to death and tossed down a well on the grounds of Gracie Mansion, it looks as if it may be connected to the murdered woman from the ship.

As Alex and the two detectives, Chapman and Mercer try to solve the crimes and trying to find the link between, we meet up with characters from the previous books and introduced to new ones and as it has become part of the author's books, we get a glimpse New York City landmarks and history that are linked to the storyline.

A fast, tight a very enjoyable read.

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### **Skyqueen says**

It is amazing that after her 12th book in the series, Ms. Fairstein can still find unique and interesting niches in New York City to incorporate into her narrative, in fact, usually becoming an integral part of the plot. Definitely a testament to her breadth and width of interest and talent. If I ever get a chance to visit, I will certainly have to make all these spots rather than the declined SNL show or the now defunct Letterman Show. Shall we say a testament to my maturity maybe?

Anyway, as always she combines equal parts: suspense, mystery, local history and politics, minor sexual tension with that delicious detective, and food! Oh I mean delicious food. What could be better?

What i want to know though is if her signature hook of the Jeopardy questions are from actual shows, or has she manufactured them to fit the story? I'll have to ask her. Yes. She *will* write you back. A true class act. And I actually knew the answer to this one!!

Already started book 13, Silent Mercy, right here at Silent Night Christmas, and it involves churches. A 3.5 for Hell Gate.

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### **Kimberly says**

I have read all of Fairstein's Alexandra Cooper novels, but this one will be one of my least favorite. I enjoy reading about the recurring characters and the historic places in New York City - no other series makes me want to visit New York the way hers do. But, this one was so full of politicians and crooked officials and overlapping plots, it just seemed too full and jumbled. And the almost relationship between Cooper and Chapman is very frustrating. There is always just the hint of attraction, but then it is ignored and they each continue to be involved with other people. It is the same tried and true plot each time - Enough already! I am sure I will continue with the next book in the series and just hope this one was a bit of a dud and that she will do something - anything - different about the main characters' feelings for each other.

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### **Julia Farrell says**

I love the Alex Cooper books. I think Fairstein is a good author, she surely knows how to tell a story. Her research into esoteric pieces of NYC history are really great -- I'd read the books just for them but, the story around them is always interesting.

I have one gripe and this is true for all the books (at least the 12 I've read). The book moves along at an excellent pace all the way through. The characters are developed, the story unfolds, the reality is in place and then -- EVERY TIME, with about 30 pages to go -- the book devolves into a completely unrealistic scenario where the ADA is put in a life threatening situation, often with a gun to her head. Then she performs some unrealistic feat and saves herself and the day. I usually have to take a break from reading the book at this point -- my credibility is stretched so thin. I love these books but just wish the endings could be the well paced, realistic stories that the rest of the books are.

If the endings were realistic, I'd give the books 4 or 5 stars.

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### **Sam says**

This is a good relatively fast paced crime thriller that combines the worlds of human trafficking, politics and a good dose of New York history. The story itself is good and keeps you interested with lots of twists and turns, although there are possibly a few too many for me. The thing that let this down was the characters, I found Alex somewhat weak willed, particularly for a woman in her position, surely she should have a bit more backbone but every time something remotely bad happens Mike and Mercer gallop in and whisk her away. And she does nothing to stop them. Personally I would've expected her to be more feisty than that, especially as she's meant to be the lead character and play a key role in the investigations. Overall not bad but a few niggly points that overshadow an otherwise good story.

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### **Anne (Booklady) Molinarolo says**

I really enjoy Linda Fairstein's Alexandra Cooper Series. I happened upon the former Manhattan DA and her

novels by accident, and truly love her mysteries and writing style. She's easy to read, fast paced, and knows how to build suspense without having the reader to suspend too much disbelief. I love how Fairstein brings in *Jeopardy!* to relieve some tense moments. I love that Detectives Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace are walking encyclopedias of NYC history. I always learn a few things when I read Linda Fairstein. I like the relationship between Alex and the two detectives - they are so much like a married couple, whether they are all three together or are paired two together. Fairstein always has numerous plots and sub-plots that almost always come together as one major case the trio must solve, and *Hell Gate* is no different. I've seen some reviewer comments lamenting this, but I love the chaos. And it seems appropriate for the DA Office and the NYPD. Just because a major case is being worked on, crime doesn't stop. The new crimes may be linked to the "big" case.

In *Hell Gate* the old beautiful Federal Mansions in NYC become the scenes of criminal Acts. A body is found in the well at Gracie Mansion. A U.S. Congressman is arrested after an accident - he was drunk and fighting with his baby mama before both disappeared. Can anyone say John Edwards? A plan to pay for play is uncovered as the powers that be in Albany decide whom is to take the Manhattan Congressional seat. The money trail is leading back to the District Attorney Office as well as to high City Officials. But could it lead back to the boat accident that drowned several Ukrainians being smuggled into the United States by a powerful "snakehead?" And could the leader of the Federal Task Force on Human Trafficking have anything to do with any of it, or all of it. Alex is stunned, and is determined to get to the bottom of the *Sub Rosa* case with the help of her two favorite NYPD Detectives.

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### **judy says**

I keep asking myself why I keep reading Fairstein. I'm so comfortable with the characters they almost cease to interest me. I've not been happy with the last several mysteries--and I think this one was the worst. When I open her books, I know exactly what I'm going to get--and that's the problem. As a history buff, I'm always amazed and delighted by the NYC history she imparts. Really fascinating. I follow NYC closely enough that I catch most of the insider references--and that's kind of fun too. Mainly, I hold great respect for her because, for two decades, she was the trailblazing Chief of the Sex Crimes Unit for the Manhattan DA. We watch her counterparts each week on Law & Order SVU. Bottom line--I'll keep reading her as long as she keeps writing. Her books may not be "Oh Wow!" anymore but they are never a waste of my time.

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### **Jennifer says**

I accidentally returned this book to the library 1/4 of the way in, so my reading was interrupted significantly! However, once I got it back from the library, it was hard to keep going. I slogged on, trying to keep the players on track in my mind, and to maintain interest in the two separate stories that were very obviously going to merge. Even when I was 10 pages from the ending, I set it down to finish later -- never a good sign with a mystery book! There were few surprises, and too many bad guys. I'm tired of the Mike/Coop faux-mance that keeps being dangled in front of the readers. Let Alex move on and be happy with one of the many great guys she dates.

This was just not one of the best from Ms. Fairstein. The lack of real tension, gritty action, and interesting characters made some of her general flaws (too preachy and didactic tones) more obvious and less palatable.

I'll read the next one, but am hoping for reinvigorated life in the characters!

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## **Fi says**

I've enjoyed all the other Alex Cooper books that I've read, but the first seven chapters of this one dwelled so much on the political machinations between the various legal departments (not to mention historical & architectural lessons on New York) that I'd gleaned barely an inkling of an actual plot to pull me through the boring bits, & actually found myself flicking through the pages to see how much longer I had to keep reading to get to the end of the current chapter.

This was A Bad Sign .....

Of all the hundreds of books I've read, I've only ever given up on a handful; and this was one of them.

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