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Chris Culver

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Ash Rashid thought his days as a homicide detective were over. Now with the police force's community relations department, he gives speeches at elementary schools instead of tracking criminals. But when he discovers two dead bodies during his evening commute, Ash finds himself back on active duty. As he races to identify the victims and track down an abducted witness, Ash realizes that nothing is what it seems. Every clue, every suspect, leads to new questions-and new threats. His quest for the truth soon leads him into the heart of a mastermind's bloody vendetta. Ash has sacrificed too much to back down-and he may now have to pay with his life . . .

By Any Means Details

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From Reader Review By Any Means for online ebook

Dianne says

Ash Rashid is a veteran police officer, once a homicide investigator, but due to problems he has had, is currently assigned as the officer who goes to schools educating kids on safety. When he comes across a damaged car with two dead bodies in it, the long day he had just had takes having a bad day to a whole new level. There is more than meets the eye to these two deaths, as Ash is placed in charge of the scene and one mistake after another, peer pressure and resentment and FBI involvement make his life a living nightmare. Will his past come back to haunt him when the shroud of death and conspiracies and human trafficking hangs over these murders? Will past connections cause him to walk the fine line of legal vs illegal, tempting him to cross over, just a little bit? Lives are on the line and time is running out. How can Ash solve this case if the FBI even has doubts about him?

Chris Culver has created a world that is stark, lonely and filled with intrigue and pain. As a character, Ash is unique, with a completely unique set of odds that are working against him. Few on the force are sure of his loyalties and only his home and family are his safe haven. I almost think Mr. Culver went overboard in creating so much drama for Ash, who is Muslim, has a drinking problem, has been caught up in some shady business associations and has lost the trust of all but a few as an officer they would want watching their backs. And, it was Ramadan, when fasting from sunrise to sunset is a way of honoring the sacrifices made long ago, by living a sacrifice of all forms of nourishment. Honestly, I was slightly taken aback by how often Ash's religion was brought up. For me, it wasn't necessary. Mr. Culver has an amazingly captivating and well-paced story to tell that is filled with intrigue, murder, tension and the horrors of human trafficking. I don't need my heroes to be over-the-top Supermen, but Ash comes across as floundering in his own skin when clearly he is a brilliant detective with heart.

I received an ARC edition from Grand Central Publishing in exchange for my honest review.

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Maureen Walker says

Quite good

Wennie says

Note: An eBook copy provided by NetGalley

By Any Means is the third book in the Ash Rashid series, but can stand alone on its own. Police sergeant Ash Rashid continues to battle his internal demons and well as external bias from his own colleagues as he fights against time to find the killers of a well-to-do couple, who has also kidnapped a good Samaritan who stopped to help what appeared to be a motor vehicle accident.

Chris Culver was quite adept in giving us just little snippets of what happened, adroitly pulling us along with Sgt. Rashid in his race to find the killer/kidnapper. To complicate matters, Sgt. Rashid struggles to find the balance between a job where murder and death are a daily occurrence and the light, love and serenity of family life. He fights against the increasing desire to find comfort at the bottom of the bottle.

But this story is not just about Sgt. Rashid's struggle. By Any Means is definitely a police thriller – where the cops find themselves one step behind, where they have little choice but to buy into information shared by unreliable sources, and where infighting between colleagues is normal.

Chris Culver has successfully created memorable characters and brought them to life, making them real and believable. There were some portions of the plot that I felt were contrived, and too predictable. Although Sgt. Rashid is a Muslim, Chris Culver did not use this book to pontificate on the merits of being a Muslim, but used it as a springboard to develop Sgt. Rashid's character.

The story moved along at a fast pace. At the end of the story, the major storylines related to the death of the couple in the car and the kidnap victim were addressed, and yet, Chris was able to close this book with enough open plot points that make me want to read the next book in this series.

All in all, if you are looking for a good police thriller with an unconventional hero, this is the book for you.

John Purvis says

“By Any Means” will be published in 2014 (May) and was written by Chris Culver. This is Mr. Culver's fifth novel to be published in his mystery series following the character of Ash Rashid.

Indianapolis Detective Ash Rashid is currently working community relations. He has had that detail for the last eight months following his encounter and subsequent shooting death of a young man with a gun. He was cleared in the shooting, but still has not been returned to his status as a detective. The fact that Rashid is a Muslim is woven through the story, but really does not enter into the mystery.

He encounters what appears to be an auto accident on his way home one afternoon that thrusts him back into the role of detective. What appears to be an accident, quickly develops into a homicide. To complicate matters, a good samaritan stopping to help has been kidnapped.

Because of the urgency of the situation and the fact that he started the investigation, Rashid is somewhat reluctantly placed in charge by his superiors. As the investigation progresses, the crime seems to be somehow tied to human trafficking and prostitution.

An underworld contact of Rashid's, the Russian Kostya (a character from earlier books in the series), is somehow involved. While he provides Rashid with information, he also has his own agenda.

I enjoyed this book. The characters were well developed, and the story engaging. Given the opportunity I would read other books by this author.

Larry H says

Full disclosure: I received an advance readers copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an unbiased review.

"In a world full of sinners, the good guys couldn't all be saints."

Those words, spoken by Indianapolis Police Detective Sergeant Ash Rashid, couldn't sum him up any better. A Muslim and a recovering alcoholic, he's fiercely devoted to his family and strongly believes that those who commit crimes should be punished, even if his methods of uncovering evidence or ensuring criminals get what they deserve aren't always by the book.

After a run-in with his boss sees him transferred to the police department's community relations team, he finds himself advising city residents how to protect themselves and giving speeches to school groups instead of fighting crime. One late afternoon in the middle of Ramadan, on the way home from a day of speeches, he comes upon a car accident—an expensive car has apparently run into a telephone pole. The car seems out of place in the dangerous neighborhood. And it turns out this is no routine accident, as the driver and a passenger have apparently been murdered, and there's blood in the back seat of the car.

Of course, it gets worse. The suspected murderer has kidnapped a Good Samaritan, a nurse, who called 911 from the accident scene. Although reluctant to do so, Ash's supervisors put him in charge of the investigation, since he was the first officer on the scene. But everything gets more complicated—Ash has more than one enemy among his fellow officers, his supervisors don't trust him, the FBI gets involved and isn't interested in sharing information, and worst of all, one of the victims was the estranged daughter of druglord Konstantin Bukoholov, with whom Ash has a strange relationship, in that he'd like to throw Konstantin in jail, but the druglord often points him toward evidence he needs to convict people.

One of Konstantin's tips take Ash to a local bed and breakfast, which turns out to be an entirely different and more horrifying business than it appears. Ash is determined to uncover the truth, even if it means putting himself in danger, risking his own life, and taking ethical shortcuts to get the information he needs. And as he battles his superiors and the FBI, he also must beat Konstantin before he takes justice into his own hands.

The third book in Chris Culver's series featuring Ash Rashid, *By Any Means* is a quick, well-written read with a tremendously compelling main character. This is the second book I've read in the series (after the first book, *The Abbey*), and I'm still really enjoying Ash's character, despite his somewhat skewed sense of right and wrong. He's a refreshing addition to the detective/mystery genre, as he's flawed but not completely on the wrong side of the law, and conflicted by his job but not utterly angst-ridden.

While there isn't much that's surprising in the plot, that doesn't matter. *By Any Means* is compelling and enjoyable, with a good amount of both action and introspection. Ash Rashid is definitely a character worth getting to know.

Joanne says

This is the third book that I am reading in the Ash Rashid series by Chris Culver. I loved the first two this one was ok but not my favorite. Detective (also lawyer....non-practicing) Rashid gets involved in human

trafficking in a roundabout way. He was driving home and saw what he thought was a car accident only to find out that the man and woman had been shot to death. The killer abducted the driver of another car (she was a good samaritan) and so the hunt is on for the abducted woman with the side story being who was responsible for the killing of the original couple and where is the abducted woman which in turn leads to the human trafficking story. It did give more insight into the character of a Russian crime boss who involves Ash in criminal activities even though he would rather not get involved because it creates problems for him. But a crime is a crime and no matter how he finds out about it, Ash is compelled to follow through.

Just not as good as *The Abbey* or *The Outsider* by Mr. Culver. I have two more to read so I am hoping they are in the same mode as the two aforementioned books.

Malvine says

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Joanna says

By Any Means is the third book in the Detective Ash Rashid series. I did not read the first two books but was able to jump into this one with no problem. I really enjoyed the story but wish it had not ended on a bit of a cliffhanger for Ash.

Simon says

Book 3 in the series and another enjoyable read for me, I soon realised that I had nearly finished it and thought wow this story could of gone on another 100 pages, so a fast hang on to your pants US cop crime procedural story, very easy to read and is a pleasant change as it involves a struggling Muslim cop in a very white none religious community.

Margaret Wilkening says

Netgalley gave me the opportunity to preview *By Any Means* by Chris Culver. When I found that he had written two other books, *The Abbey* and *The Outside*, I decided to read those first.

I was intrigued by Culver's character, Ash Rashid, a Muslim police officer in the Indianapolis police department. Rashid's flawed character has depth. He is a spiritual man who also battles alcoholism, an escape for the inhumanity he has faced on the job. In the first two books, Culver does a nice job developing Ash's character, but it is a bit disconcerting that he switches from first to third person narration. I would recommend that these books be read prior to reading *By Any Means*. The characters, a feel for the city, and past story lines that are developed in the first two books continue in *By Any Means*.

By the beginning of *By Any Means*, Ash has been on the wagon for several weeks, and has been switched to community relations. While driving home to meet his family for prayers and to break the Ramadan fast, he is the first to arrive on the scene of a car wreck. Complications ensue when he finds that the passengers are not only dead, but appear to have been shot as well.

Ash is pulled into the investigation, invigorated to be part of the excitement and challenges active detective work. The plot develops numerous twists that kept me turning pages, and Culver keeps the action going. However, I did feel that Culver had trouble keeping Ash true to the character he built in previous books. Ash's moral compass appears to waver a great deal more in this third book. Ash never shied away from danger, but in *By Any Means*, he more quickly justifies questionable actions, or even worse, doesn't seem bothered by breaking the law. I will be interested to see if future books develop his internal struggles, or if Culver is simply still trying to find out what type of book he wants to write.

Melissa says

Synopsis: At the end of a particularly grueling summer day, Ash Rashid is heading home to his wife and kids when he discovers a pair of bodies, shot execution style, in the front seat of a crashed vehicle. As the first officer on the scene, Ash finds himself and his department 20 minutes behind a killer in a race where every second counts. With two victims down and a third unaccounted for, the clock is ticking and Ash must find the killer before he strikes again.

Review: This book was middle of the road for me. It started off as a typical police mystery. The plot then split and for the majority of the book, it switched back and forth between two characters and their stories. Without giving too much detail, these two characters had one thread that connected them both to each other and the case. This kept me intrigued for the first third to half of the book. However, it got to be too many characters and story lines to keep track of, at least to me. Some sections of this book were suspenseful however the story mostly flowed with the details of the case. The end wrapped up fairly quickly. I will admit I'm curious to see what happens to Ash Rashid next.

As an aside, this is the first Chris Culver book I have read. There are 2 other Ash Rashid novels and I wonder if reading these first would have made any difference.

Recommended For: Fans of crime fiction, murder mysteries.

*Disclaimer: I received an e-ARC of this book from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review.

This review also on my blog at <http://athreadoffiction.blogspot.com/>

Heather Fineisen says

3.5 A Muslim police detective investigates a case of murder during Ramadan in this series procedural by Chris Culver. This cultural twist and the moral antagonizing of law enforcers vs. bad guys pushes it above the standard crime fare. The dialogue drags a bit in places, but overall a good read. A cliffhanger ending has enticed me to continue the series and maybe even read the first two. Good stuff!

Provided by publisher

Lindsey Silvestrini says

This was a fast paced, edge of my seat page turner! Christ Culver grabbed me from page one of By Any Means and didn't let go and I LOVE books like that!

I'm a sleep deprived mom. A book HAS to be good to keep me from nodding off! This one kept me up way past my bedtime because I couldn't put it down. That says a lot about a book because sleep is my long lost friend in life right now.

I loved Ash Rashid's character and his straightforward, no nonsense attitude. He stumbles upon a homicide that pulls him right back into the life as a detective. The mystery slowly begins to unfold but Culver is not going to give you more than a little at a time. Ash thinks outside the box and that's why he's respected and needed in this case. While he's walked away from the detective life in favor of the classroom, he hasn't lost his touch.

I liked the depth Culver went to developing Ash's character and showing his issues but also his good sides as a family man who loved his wife. Culver also made you feel for the missing woman in this story and her family. The depths Ash goes to in finding her and the amount of heart he puts into it make him endearing and you will find yourself cheering him on and hoping against hope for the best possible outcome.

Just when things seem to be going in one direction towards a certain resolution, a U-turn will get flipped on you and you are left with a mystery. I really appreciated Culver's style of writing and how it was simplistic yet intricate and complex at the same time. It made for a perfect, edge of my seat read in By Any Means.

Becca says

Ash is a cop who has been doing D.A.R.E. meetings instead of walking the beat for a while. When driving home he comes upon a car crash. When he goes to inspect the vehicle he sees two bodies in it. His day gets much worse after that.

Ash has made some choices as a cop and aligned himself with some not so good people, but that has allowed him to put some even worse people in jail. He seems to think it's a good trade off. As long as he is able to put bad guys away he doesn't see any harm in working with a known criminal.

Kostya Bukoholov is a bad guy. Plain and simple. He finds out that his daughter has been killed and goes into action. He is willing to do whatever it takes to bring his daughters murderer to justice. He has not qualms about stepping outside the lines of "legal" means. Like I said he is a bad guy. He gets results. I will give him that. As a mother, I think I can totally see where he is coming from. I would hope I had the control to let the authorities take care of it, but when my kids are in trouble my "mad momma bear" kicks in. I am a little irrational. hehe! I think Kostya is the same way. Just on a much deeper level. He has dealt with evil many times.

The way things unwind in this book are so great. I thought Ash was a great character. He loved his wife. I think that is probably why I liked him so much. In the book even when he is having a really bad day, he always thinks about his wife, and does all he can for his family. It's such a nice change from all the bad father/guy stories out there.

Ash is a great detective. He thinks about things that others don't and is sometimes willing to step outside the "line" to get results.

I have often wondered if I would be able to handle being married to a Police Man. I would be terrified every

day that they wouldn't come home. Ash had a way of getting himself into situations, because he is unwilling to accept defeat.

It seemed like when one thing was on the verge of being resolved another element entered and made it more exciting. While the pieces come together it made me sit on the edge of my seat waiting to see what was going to happen.

The lengths that Ash goes to, to find a missing girl make you really root for him as a detective. Even if he is working and getting his information from "bad guy" Bukoholov. He knows someone is in trouble, and he will go to any lengths (even out of his jurisdiction) to solve the mystery.

If you like mystery, and detective stories, this book is a good one to pick up. It's an intriguing story with twists and turns, that kept me guessing. I really enjoy that :).

Source: Thanks Netgalley and Grand Central Publishing for allowing me to review this novel. It was such a great read. I was not compensated in any way for this review, these are my own PERSONAL thoughts on the book.

Sean says

Disclaimer: ARC copy from Netgalley.

By Any Means, by Chris Culver, is the first of the series I've read involving Detective Sergeant Ash Rashid, the Muslim officer of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. One of the contradictions I found so engaging in this book is he's Muslim, but he is an alcoholic. He's sober now, but who knows how long that will last? You apparently have to read to find out. It was interesting to learn some of the Muslim customs like fasting on Ramadan, and that he denied the non-tolerant leanings of his sister's Muslim husband.

Beyond being an interesting hook with him being Muslim, this book is actually a well-written police thriller. It's fast-paced tale of revenge and justice grabs readers from the very beginning and doesn't let them go until the last page. The big player has ulterior motives for all the nastiness he does, which keeps readers guessing until the very end. Even when he's saving someone, it still doesn't seem pure. Ash is a multi-faceted character, willing to bend the law (but not break it!) to do what is right. That's what interests me about him. In one instance, he calls out another officer for not telling the truth because it will put him in danger. Then, he calls him after everything settles down to see how he's doing. He's constantly striving to be the best by always doing the right thing. I highly recommend this book to all who like police thrillers or to those who are looking for something new and interesting.
