



## Dead Write

*Sheila Lowe*

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## Dead Write Sheila Lowe

Lowe wins readers over with her well-developed heroine and the wealth of fascinating detail on handwriting analysis." -Booklist Sheila Lowe's mysteries "just keep getting better," [American Chronicle] thanks to feisty forensic handwriting expert Claudia Rose, who knows that when it comes to solving a murder, sometimes the pen can be mightier than the sword. Claudia heads to the Big Apple at the behest of Grusha Olinetsky, the notorious founder of an elite dating service whose members are mysteriously dying. The assignment puts Claudia at odds with her boyfriend, LAPD detective Joel Jovanic, who suspects Grusha herself is trouble. Drawn into the feckless lives of the rich and single, Claudia finds herself enmeshed in a twisted world of love and lies fueled by desperation. But desperate enough to kill? Clues in the suspects' handwriting might help Claudia save Grusha's already dubious reputation before the names of more victims are scribbled into someone's little black book. "Sheila Lowe is the Kathy Reichs of forensic handwriting-a rip-roaring read." - Deborah Crombie, National Bestselling Author of "Necessary as Blood

## Dead Write Details

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## From Reader Review Dead Write for online ebook

### Patricia says

Claudia Rose, a handwriting expert, agrees to make an appearance on Hard Evidence, a television show that airs nationally. Claudia is just leaving the studio when she receives a call on her cell phone from Baroness Grusha Olinetsky. Grusha is requesting that Claudia fly immediately to New York to analyze the handwriting of some of Grusha's clients in her matchmaking club. Claudia agrees to do the analysis by mail but Grusha is insisting that she must come to New York.

Claudia is reluctant to leave California and her lover, Joel Jovanic, LAPD detective, and Annabelle, the girl who is living with her. Annabelle is much better than when she first came to live with Claudia but will always be somewhat of a rebel so Claudia is not comfortable leaving her in someone else's care.

When Grusha explains that she has been using a graphologist in her business for sometime and that Claudia would be replacing Andrew Nicholson, Claudia suddenly changed her mind and decided to make the trip. Nicholson and Claudia have had problems with each other before and Claudia is anxious to see what harm Nicholson has done this time.

When she arrives in New York and is given files to go over she finds that several of the members of the matchmaking club have died recently and under suspicious circumstances. As Claudia seeks answers regarding the deaths, she places herself in danger's way.

This is the third Forensic Handwriting Mystery from Sheila Lowe. Poison Pen is the first book and Written In Blood is book number two. The combination of handwriting analysis and mystery make a good combination.

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### Betty says

Dead Write by Sheila Lowe

I have always found forensics of any type interesting and this forensic handwriting mystery did not let me down. Well-formed plot and characters, with suspense building throughout the book. This is the third in the Claudia Rose series by Sheila Lowe, but the first I have read. There are a few hints here and there that bring the reader up to date without going into a lot of repetition for those who have read the previous books.

On the strength of a television interview, Claudia receives an offer, albeit a rather demanding offer, to come to New York for an interview to work with Baroness Grusha Olinetsky -- immediately. The Baroness is a "world class matchmaker" and just fired her handwriting expert who also happens to be Claudia's nemesis. Claudia's first instinct is not to go, she is still recovering from the recent murder of a close friend and was nearly a victim of a psychopath herself. Her partner Joel Jovanic doesn't want her to go, nor does her ward,

Annabelle. However, Grusha has arranged a flight the next day from California to New York, and offered a sum she feels she can not refuse. Besides, she is concerned about how serious the "bad mistakes" were that the previous expert made.

Once in New York her life becomes a whirlwind of unique characters, handwriting with "red flags" that were ignored, and too many coincidental deaths. Who is trying to bring Grusha and her business to ruination? The action picks up as the book goes along and Claudia becomes more involved with every page, while problems are also stirring back at home.

I found the book held my attention, loved learning bits and pieces of graphology, and will definitely be reading more of Sheila Lowe's books, starting with the first. Fascinating characters, bodies piling up, until the final diabolic debacle comes crashing down. An entertaining, cohesive story with lots of conceivable suspects.

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### **Kimberly says**

Interesting mystery in the series. If you are interested in graphoanalysis, you will enjoy the tidbits of info about this profession spread throughout the novel.

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### **Roger says**

My third read from author Sheila Lowe and the third book in the Forensic Handwriting Series. Good, well-written mystery, even better than the first two books. The characters likable & attention holding. The plot and the sub-plot were both well-developed. I'll definitely be reading more in this series.

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### **Carlin says**

I had already read #4, 2, and 1 in this series (in that order) before I read this one, #3. Although I would have preferred reading them in order each book was almost a stand-alone novel and I enjoyed them all. As in #1, I had to overlook poor editing in this book to lose myself in the story, but it was worth it. It would be a 5\* rating if not for the editing.

This book took place in New York where Claudia Rose had traveled at the behest of Grusha Olinsky a woman who wanted Claudia to analyze the handwritings of clients in her high class matchmaking business. Once in New York Claudia learns that two women and one man client have died under mysterious circumstances (all had been ruled accidental but in Claudia's experience coincidences are always suspect). All the clients whose handwritings had been submitted for her analysis (including the deceased) were connected through the dating service. Three men had many markers for violence and deceit that had not been noted by the prior handwriting analyst in Grusha's employ (that analyst was known by Claudia to be a fraud). Grusha has secrets as do the agency's psychologist and physician. As deaths mount and Claudia gets more involved, she is also facing trust issues with Jovanic, her LAPD boyfriend in Las Angeles. It was a great mystery. Next is #5!

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## **VJ says**

Not realizing this was third in a series, I picked this book up during a whirlwind trip to the library. Fifteen minutes to come up with a handful of readable books isn't much...especially when I normally spend upwards of two hours browsing!

I chose this book because I've been interested in graphology for awhile now. I've always been interested in details. My grandfather was an engineer and every time I see handwriting that resembles his, it invariably belongs to either an engineer or someone who wishes they had gone to engineering school. It interests me to see just how handwriting and personality traits go together. I know a lot of people liken it to astrology or fortune-telling...but it just seems to be more accurate to me.

Anyway, I've only read a few chapters. I'll let y'all know how I like the book once I finish it.

Have we become so crass as a society that most authors feel the need to pepper their manuscripts with profanity in order to make it seem "realistic?" I'm disappointed.

The story seemed like a string of red herrings...and the author just picked one of them to be the perp. I finished the book just because I hate not finishing books. I won't be reading any more of these books. The subject matter was very intriguing but the execution of the story just wasn't my cup of tea. Others may very well like it, but I found it to be too dark, grisly, profane, and somewhat boring.

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## **Jeannie and Louis Rigod says**

This book was a great change in locations from Los Angeles, CA to New York City, NY. This added an extra dimension to this excellent series.

Although our main sleuth, hand writing expert, Claudia Rose, keeps in touch with all our familiar characters, she bridges over to another new set via the despised charlatan, Andy Nicholson. The new characters are vividly portrayed and immediately you sense Claudia should have stayed home among the palms.

This story revolves around a high-end dating club. Where the wealthy go to meet their future spouses. The club owner, herself, is a mystery, however, she does require medical/psychological/handwriting and other clearances in order that she can promote her club as a safe and clean environment. No drugs etc.

Claudia realizes that 3 young persons from the group have encountered death in unusually rare but normal means...her senses tell her there is a mystery here.

Sheila Lowe took us out of the box and landed us in a box of deep chocolates with mysterious fillings. I recommend this book and the entire series to all.

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## **Patty says**

Handwriting analysis Claudia Rose is at it again, fighting crime while doing her day job of checking handwriting submitted by her clients. In this episode Claudia is asked to go to New York (she lives in LA) to consult with a matchmaking agency. While not thrilled with the idea Claudia also needs some space from her lover Jovanic and teenager Annabelle who is now living with her. Baroness Grusha seems to be keeping secrets and the handwriting samples all have some very strange features. When Claudia uncovers murder the hunt is on, who wants clients dead, and why?

I was a little worried about Claudia in this one, she went off alone with several of her suspects, at least once without telling anyone who she was with or where they were going. Since she was actively hunting a killer it wasn't the smartest thing to do.

I'll continue reading this series because I love the characters and the insight into forensic handwriting analysis is fascinating. I just hope that this experience scares a little common sense into Claudia about being overly friendly with her suspects.

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## **Nancy says**

Enjoyable so far. Recommended by an author friend named Brian Lowe (although no relation to the author, he has met her).

... I finished the book and as much as I'd love to give it a glowing review, I'm afraid I can't. The premise had promise--graphologist Claudia Lowe is summoned from L.A. to New York to help the eccentric owner of an exclusive dating service because clients are dying.

The delivery was disappointing. It just wasn't believable, maybe because a lot of details were glossed over, or because I have not read any other books in the series. I had the feeling that the book was rushed, and I was being pulled along with it at a rate that didn't provide a satisfying reading experience.

I suspect that followers of Claudia Rose's adventures will be able to fill in a lot of what I didn't get. I probably should have stopped reading and gone back to the first novel so that I knew more about her. Overall I found everything to be not realistic enough for my taste (ok, except for some of the parts at the end which were creepy in a good way!)

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## **Susan Pettrone says**

Claudia begins her story, driving at the unbelievable time of pre-dawn, heading for a faux news show where she would be interviewed about handwriting analysis and how it works. True, Claudia was happy she was asked to do this interview but the early morning hour was just not her time. Thankfully the interview was short and Claudia was back in her car and headed towards home in no time.

As she drives, her phone rings. Baroness Grusha Olinestsky, world wide matchmaker to the rich and famous requests, (actually demands) her help in analyzing the writing of some of her clients. She promised full payment for all Claudia's expenses, and begs her to consider the offer.

After a short discussion with Joel Jovanic, her live in boyfriend and Annabelle, a troubled young teen she had taken in her home to help after Annabelle had had a horrific encounter with the same psychopath Claudia had, just a months prior, it was decided that all needs were met on the LA end and Claudia should go to see what the Baroness had that was so important that she refused to fax it, but preferred it be analyzed in person.

Arriving in New York, Claudia quickly settles in and has her first of many meetings with the Baroness. Delving into the handwriting samples given her, Claudia learns that two of the young women Shellee, and Heather as well as one man Ryan, had died under mysterious circumstances, each with many questions left unanswered. Thinking further about the three deaths, A scuba diving accident, fatal skiing and a case of anaphylactic shock all have Claudia's attention but she reminds herself time and again, she has been hired to be a handwriting analyst not a detective.

Arriving the next morning to discuss her findings, she learns the Baroness had been attacked the night before. Apparently someone came up behind her as she was in the kitchen and hit her over the head, rendering her unconscious. Discussing the possibility of canceling a large party the Baroness had planned for Saturday, the decision was made to keep the plans intact on the off chance that they would learn something about the attack on the Baroness as well as give Claudia a chance to meet the persons she had just evaluated.

The Baroness is naturally very concerned about the reputation of her business, as two of the young women and Ryan, Claudia had evaluated had been slain, quite possibly by someone the Baroness had arranged a date for through her company.

As Claudia goes through information she sees patterns of negative behavior in some of the individuals the dead clients dated which concerns her. Sharing with the Baroness about some of her concerns, it seems the Baroness brushes aside Claudia's concerns, explaining the discoveries with simple, straightforward answers. It seems, the less the connection to her company and the deaths, the better for Baroness Grusha Olinestsky, a feeling Claudia does not share.

During their discussion, Claudia receives a picture text on her phone concerning her boyfriend Joel and his attractive partner Alex that fills much of her off time wondering what if anything is happening while she is away working for the Baroness.

As time goes on, events begin to occur which not only concern but frighten both Claudia, and the Baroness. It is obvious that someone has a problem with the Baroness and time begins to become of the essence as to finding out what is behind the possible sabotage of Baroness Grusha's business.

Peace once again is found with Joel and Claudia as he visits her in New York and explains that the photo she saw was part of a cover he and his partner were working and in no way was he interested in nor did he even consider any woman to be better in his life than Claudia.

During the Baroness' grand party, Andy Nicholson, a handwriting expert like Claudia but with less morals and a somewhat sorted past, shows up at the party. The Baroness is quite upset over the fact that her enemy Andy showed up at the party, uninvited. Suddenly there was more to worry about than Andy. A young woman, Mindy Jarrett began to show signs of having ingested a hallucinogenic drug as shortly afterwards did Aisha Negasi. Taking charge, Claudia orders certain party goers to take the effected women to the office until she can come up with a solution. But before she can think of a solution, a far more serious event begins to take place.

Suddenly there is a commotion on the balcony and events unfurl that are best left for the reader to discover on ones own. As the following moments, hours and days unfurl, Claudia is faced with a confession, a suicide and finally an abduction....her own. As the events lie before her, Claudia discovers who is behind all the heinous crimes, the deaths, and her very own abduction along with that of Baroness Grusha.

This book is a fascinating one. One filled with many multileveled characters who come to life before ones eyes. What starts out as a simple handwriting analysis is suddenly more and how Claudia and the author handle the ever changing characters and plotlines is inventive as well as "sit on the edge of your seat" nerve wracking.

I would suggest this book for those who enjoy a mystery that entails secrets, complicated characters and twists galore as well as a heroine such as Claudia. It is a book that is not to be missed. Read it and you'll find for yourself, how mesmerizing this small paperback can be.

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### **Bonnie C Myers says**

#### **Good read**

I read the first book and was instantly hook. I have to finish the series. The book is can be read as stand-alone and is still good. You'll be guessing until the end.

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### **Martha Cheves says**

Dead Write - Review by Martha A. Cheves, Author of Stir, Laugh, Repeat

'His choice of pen had already told Claudia something about him. Even before she began to analyze the handwriting, she knew that he cared about the way things looked, that he had an eye for color and texture. And it was unnecessary for her to read the text of what he had written to understand what the symbolism meant in terms of the movement of the writing across the paper, the spatial arrangement, the writing form.'

Claudia Rose is a handwriting expert. She has been contracted by Grusha Olinetsky, owner of an upscale dating service, to analyze the handwriting of some of her clients. Grusha runs a strict service and if there are hidden personality traits among her clients, she wants to know.

As Claudia analyzes the writing samples given to her by Grusha she finds several that Grusha should be worried about. Several of her clients have raised what she calls "red flags." But what Claudia also discovers, is that she has been given the files of three clients who have recently died. All deaths seem to be accidental with no police involvement and could be just a coincidence, but Claudia doesn't believe in coincidences. And as she interviews Dr. Ian McAllister, who is responsible for medically checking out all of Grusha's clients, her suspicions of murder grow. But what motive could there possibly be for the deaths of three innocent clients who are just seeking companionship and love?

Sheila Lowe has been a practicing handwriting expert for more than forty years and her expertise shows in her book *Dead Write*. As each character was introduced and as each chapter was read, I became more and more involved with the story. This book is so intense that as I read I would find myself suspecting one character only to suspect another as I turned to the next page. It was a hard book to put down. So, if you love a really great murder suspense, this book is definitely for you.

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### **NaTaya Hastings says**

I received a copy of this book through First Reads giveaways, and I have to say, I'm very glad that I did. Despite the fact that this book is third in a series -- and I haven't read the first two -- I had no trouble falling into the story and understanding what was going on. When I entered the giveaway for the this book, I was terribly ambivalent about being selected as one of the winners because I felt that a book calling itself "A Forensic Handwriting Mystery" had the potential to either be very interesting and unique OR be horribly boring and silly.

Thankfully, this book turned out to belong to that former category. I really enjoyed reading about Claudia Rose and her handwriting analysis expertise. The plot is similar to an episode of *Bones*. Some people die, and the protagonist comes into contact with several viable suspects who could have potentially done the killing. Then she is forced to endure endless uncomfortable and nerve-shattering situations with each of these potential murderers until everything finally comes to a head at the end. Pretty standard stuff, really. But Sheila Lowe writes beautifully, and her characters -- especially Claudia, Joel, and the gender-confused matchmaker Grusha -- are personable and endearing. Not to mention the whole handwriting thing... it adds a totally unique angle which I've never experienced before. I fully intend on looking up the other two books in the series and reading them quite soon.

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### **Darcy Odden says**

This is author Sheila Lowe's third installment in her Forensic Handwriting Series with Claudia Rose, a Los Angeles graphologist or handwriting expert. I had not read the first two books in the series and had no trouble catching up with what had happened in Claudia's past.

Fresh off the heels of a close call with murder, Claudia is invited to New York to analyze handwriting samples for Baroness Grusha Olinetsky, a Russian woman who owns a matchmaking service. Claudia finds herself in the middle of what she thinks are the mysterious deaths of Grusha's clients and her graphology skills are put to the test to uncover a killer. Claudia's attempts to find the killer are thwarted by several suspects and also by Grusha herself. Throw in a little professional rivalry and some trust issues with her LAPD cop boyfriend and Claudia's week in New York turns into a whirlwind.

I enjoyed this fast-paced mystery and was surprised by a few of the turns it took. I also appreciated Lowe's keen descriptions including "... a human tsunami flooding the streets" in her description of Forty-eighth

Street. In this series, Lowe shares her skills in graphology with readers which may well nudge them into checking out her nonfiction books on handwriting analysis. Mystery lovers won't go wrong with "Dead Write."

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## Monie says

After completing an interview giving her thoughts on the latest misbehaving celebrity, handwriting expert Claudia Rose received a call from a potential new client. Baroness Grusha Olinetsky owner of Elite Introductions would like to hire Claudia to analyze the handwriting of her wealthy clients to ensure good matches.

The Baroness quickly gets Claudia on a plane to New York from California and once she starts reviewing the client files, Claudia sees more than a few red flags that cause her concern. After a close friend was recently murdered, Claudia is hesitant to be drawn into anything even remotely dangerous but the Baroness pleads for her help.

Still unsure that anything serious is going on Claudia agrees but she quickly learns that several members of the dating service have died in the past few weeks and although each death appears to be natural or accidental, Claudia tries unsuccessfully to cut all ties with the Baroness. Now Claudia is right in the middle of the feuding playboys who are her number one suspects and on top of that, her relationship with her boyfriend back home is on very shaky ground.

Dead Write is book three in the Claudia Rose Forensic Handwriting Mystery series however it does stand alone. There are a few references to the events in books one and two but you can jump right into this story without missing a beat.

What I especially like about this book is the plausible storyline. Claudia isn't stumbling over dead bodies and jumping in to investigate the murders like in most cozies. It's a more realistic scenario where she even tries to run away from any sign of trouble.

I also love the unique premise of Claudia's work as a graphologist. Sheila Lowe has over 25 years of experience in this field but the book doesn't get too technical with the details. She makes it interesting enough that I want to get my own handwriting analyzed along with my husband and co-workers.

There is a pretty good cliffhanger at the end of Dead Write that leaves me anxiously awaiting the next book in the series which will hopefully be along soon. All three books in the series are a must read for all cozy and mystery lovers.

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