



## **D is for Deadbeat**

*Sue Grafton*

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## **D is for Deadbeat** Sue Grafton

When Alvin Limardo walks into P.I. Kinsey Millhone's office, she smells bad news. He wants Kinsey to deliver \$25,000. The recipient: A fifteen-year-old boy. It's a simple matter. So simple that Kinsey wonders why he doesn't deliver the money himself. She's almost certain something is off. But with rent due, Kinsey accepts Limardo's retainer against her better judgment...

When Limardo's check bounces, Kinsey discovers she's been had big time. Alvin Limardo is really John Daggett—an ex-con with a drinking problem, two wives to boot, and a slew of people who would like to see him dead. Now Kinsey is out four hundred dollars and in hot pursuit of Daggett.

When Daggett's corpse shows up floating in the Santa Teresa surf, the cops rule the death an accident. Kinsey thinks it's murder. But seeking justice for a man who everyone seemed to despise is going to be a lot tougher than she bargained for—and what awaits her at the end of the road is much more disturbing than she could've ever imagined...

## **D is for Deadbeat Details**

Date : Published November 29th 2005 by St. Martin's Paperbacks (first published January 1st 1987)

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Author : Sue Grafton

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## From Reader Review **D is for Deadbeat** for online ebook

### **Darinda says**

Kinsey Millhone is hired to deliver a cashier's check of \$25,000, but gets stiffed on her fee. The client tells Kinsey the money is for a teenager who had helped him out. It sounds suspicious, but Kinsey takes the job. After Kinsey realizes the check for her fee has bounced, she looks up the client to get her money. She discovers he has died, in what the police call an accident. Kinsey thinks his death is suspect, and looks into it.

The 4th book in the Kinsey Millhone series. In this one, Kinsey got involved with more than she intended. For me, the case was not as interesting as some others in the series. A solid mystery, but not my favorite Kinsey book.

I listened to an audio version of this book.

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### **Carol ?? says**

4.5\*

Anyone who doesn't think this series is in decline should reread one of Grafton's older titles after the verbose

"D" is one of Grafton's best & features far tighter writing & a more interesting storyline. Even though this was a reread for me, I couldn't put it down!

Have knocked half a \* off the rating for both the unlikely original premise & resolution. I believe the book's epilogue shows that Grafton knew the solution was weak but couldn't make it more persuasive.

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### **Emma says**

I thoroughly enjoy these books. Kinsey is a great character. Recommended series.

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### **Quenya says**

I have to admit this one was hard to listen to. Most of the characters were reprehensible and the background on the case was a very sad story. Throughout the book you are not sure about the John Daggett character and wonder all the times at his motives for doing things.

Kinsey has to deal with a very diverse group of characters in this book. There are ex-cons, teenagers, siblings, multiple wives and a very angry daughter. Kinsey also finds herself just waiting for a break in the case to move to the next clue. This is probably the first book where I actually felt some sympathy for the killer. When this book was over, I think I felt as tired and emotionally drained as Kinsey did – it just wasn't a

story with any light to dark places.

Judy Kaye continues to deliver one of the most consistent narrations of a book series that I have ever listened to. You always know when Kinsey is speaking and you can easily discern the voices of the other characters without any confusion.

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### **Aymee says**

I really do enjoy these books. Kinsey is hard-as-nails when she needs to be and yet funny and warm, too. Their mysteries are interesting and the characters odd.

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Better review now that I've had time:

I accidentally stumbled across R is for Ricochet several years ago while perusing the local library. Little did I know that that one book would open up a world of mystery for me. I have since gone back to the beginning and started the series in the order it was meant to be read. However, if you're impatient, so far as I can tell, you can read them as stand-alones with only minor references to previous books.

Each novel in the Kinsey Millhone series gets better as we go along. The mysteries become more tangled and the characters more devious and varied. One of the biggest draws to this series for me is the setting. Having grown up and become a real person in the eighties, I find it fun to watch her walk around town, call everyone and even use the library resources to get the information she needs. Makes you look at today's private investigators and think, "Man, they've got it easy – they've got the Internet!"

While I had some idea of who the killer was starting about halfway through, I was still shocked at the outcome of Kinsey's investigations. I never dreamed it would end the way it did, although in retrospect, it doesn't surprise me much (now). Kinsey's leaps of intuition and her cleverness, however, keep you guessing. I enjoy that seed of doubt the author is constantly planting in your mind. You're reading along and screaming silently, "The butler did it! I know he did!" and then you turn the page and think, "Wait, maybe the maid did it..." That's a great mystery writer for you. And who knows, maybe the butler did do it.

I highly recommend this series to anyone and everyone.

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### **Tricia says**

Despite enthusiastic recommendations from some highly discerning reader friends, I'd never picked up a Sue Grafton novel before this one. I started with "D" rather than "A" because that was the copy I found available at my local second-hand bookshop just before I left on a long plane trip. It's a yellowed, pulpy paperback I planned to pitch after I finished it.

Who knew? In detective Kinsey Millhone, Grafton creates a character who sounds like a stereotype--hard-boiled outside, vulnerable inside--until you spend ten pages with her. Not only is she seriously funny, she's got a terrific dark streak. She had me at "Sometimes I picture death as a wide stone staircase, filled with a

silent procession of those being led away."

Grafton is a master of the atmospheric setting, and Millhone's tick of observing every detail of a character's dress and mannerisms does not get old. I finished the novel on a subway in Japan, no mean feat. And I brought it back home with me!

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### **Andrea says**

I was curious. It's a pretty decent page turner I guess, for what it is. I could write lots about it: it's curious how much detail it goes into, like a PI manual of sorts; no real character development but sexual tension; first person narrative so you can live these exciting scenes through her. Thing is, for me that jars terribly and her protagonist is definitely meant to appeal to a certain section of the population. Suburban. White. Comfortable. Ready for a little feminine emancipation but not too much. Wants to know how other people live, poor people and Mexicans and African Americans, but without going down 'there'. People in poor apartments are imagined as an attacking swarm, Mexican kids playing pool 'squabbled among themselves like pups'. There's a lot can be said about this kind of language and has been said much better by others but bottom line I guess, my people, my apartments, it sets me off a little.

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### **Alison says**

Sue Grafton's novels are small and yummy, like a mental Hershey's kiss. I love the way she sets up multiple potential "solutions" to her mysteries, so that you can rarely ever figure them out ahead of time. Because what a bummer that is.

The best thing about this series is Kinsey Milhone. She's tough without being manly, feisty without being mean. This woman loves her independence and thinks that being single is almost as wonderful as being rich. I keep coming back just to see what she'll eat next (a brown paper bag full of peanut butter and dill pickle sandwiches?) and to see if she'll pull out that one dress she has that never has to be ironed and is usually at the bottom of her bag or stashed somewhere in her VW.

In D is for Deadbeat, Kinsey tracks down the murderer of her client who's check bounced. He was a drunk, a bigamist, and a killer, but Kinsey feels like she owes it to him and his daughter to figure out who offed him and why. Interesting twists, satisfying and haunting resolution. Well done.

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### **Denise says**

Another fast, entertaining read. Kept me engaged until the last page.

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### **Obsidian says**

I thought this one was bit more complicated than it needed to be. Even re-reading this year's later, a lot doesn't gel together very well. We do get more information on Kinsey and others. I just think it was too

rushed as a whole to be really enjoyable.

The fourth novel finds Kinsey in a quandry. She is hired to deliver a cashier's check, but the check to her bounces. She tracks down the man who hired her and realizes that he also lied to her about his name and past. When he turns up dead, she accepts money from his estranged daughter to find out if he was murdered or not.

Diving into this one, we find out that there are plenty of people who wanted Kinsey's client dead. I think my disconnect was why Kinsey even cared. At times she hides things she knows from the man's daughter and goes that she was feeling protective. This is after she finds out he beat one woman, was responsible for the deaths of five people, and just was generally it sounded like unpleasant.

The writing was okay. My big gripe was the reveal at the end didn't work for me at all. I think Grafton wanted to add some shock value where none was needed. The flow was bumpy in this too. Probably because Kinsey kept traipsing from Santa Teresa to a town nearby.

There's some movement with Kinsey and Jonah. By since I know how that turns out, I don't much care.

The ending was a bit of a letdown. All is revealed, and in the end, I didn't think justice was really served, even if Kinsey did.

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## **Ray says**

These are like candy to me. Short, sweet, immensely satisfying. I won't claim that Grafton reaches new literary heights but they are largely well written and Kinsey is just a great character.

For what it is worth, I thought the hook here was weak. Not really sure why Kinsey would feel so beholden to a dead ex-offender to deliver a check, but whatever.

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## **Phrynn says**

I notice that if you are reading this book Goodreads suggests that you might also enjoy Sara Paretsky's V.I. Warshawski series. And I am not surprised because honestly Kinsey and Vic could be twin sisters. The same brusque personality, the same disregard for personal safety and for other people's feelings - I sometimes have to remind myself which series I am reading:)

Which is fine with me because I enjoy both. D is for Deadbeat is not one of Grafton's best but it is an easy read. The murderer was not obvious and the final part of the book was a bit over the top but probably the only possible solution.

A fun story, written well and an ideal choice if you want an easy, entertaining mystery novel.

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## William says

T is for Tedious

R is for Repetitive

K is for KMN

DNF - After reading two of her books, and seeing reviews of her Kinsey books 10-15 years later, I'm done. It's clear that Grafton is never going to do more than skim the surface of noir. Mostly a waste of time.

The thousand individual scenes of Kinsey's investigations are mostly carbon copies of each other, with a few words changed to pretend a variety.

Kinsey **is** the author, Sue Grafton, as is common in writers of fiction. And Sue's immaturity is reflected in her writing and in heroine's behaviour. Luckily, Sue has good prose, but I wish for a bit more depth to the characters and situations, and far less repetition.

The whole book is incredibly linear and by halfway through, quite tedious, and I began to skim. Not good.

There's probably 100 pages of place descriptions and clothing which don't advance the plot or characterisations. We read every change of outfit Kinsey wears, and details of what she eats and why, all becoming quite tedious by the 20th occurrence. Sheesh. Get a life.

About Santa Teresa, a fictional city used by Ross Macdonald and Sue Grafton in their noir. Sue Grafton's is about 90 minutes' drive north of Los Angeles.

Kinsey:

*Sometimes I stand in the bathtub, elbows resting on the sill, and stare at passing cars, just thinking how lucky I am. I love being single. It's almost like being rich.*

Alcoholism:

*"Look what he's done to me already. I think of him every time I have a drink. I think of him if I decide not to have a drink. If I even meet a man who drinks or if I see a bum on the street or smell bourbon, his face is the first thing that comes to mind. Oh God, and if I'm around someone who's had too much, I can't stand it. I disconnect. My life is filled with reminders of him. His apologies and his phony, wheedling charm, his boo-hooing when the booze got to him. The times he fell, the times he got put in jail, the times he spent every dime we had.*

A 37-foot Chris Craft with a flying bridge

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## James says

### **Book Review**

3.5 of 5 stars (rounded up!) to D is for Deadbeat. In this installment, Kinsey's rattled when a mysterious man asks her to deliver \$25K to someone who turns out to be a teenager. Shortly after the check he gave Kinsey for her own fee bounces and the guy turns up dead. Cut her losses? No... Investigate to see if you can recover your money. Sometimes Kinsey... you just don't know when to talk away, but at least you're not beat up in this book like previous ones. All in all, a solid book in the series. Everything is right in the comfy range here... a even-paced read, a few laugh aloud moments, a couple of hints of suspense. It's a joy to watch Kinsey work, as it is usually direct and without gimmicks. I love other series with gimmicks too, but sometimes you just want to focus on the crime and the resolution. And the setting is always great... Santa Teresa, California where the weather seems perfect and the people have just enough wit and charm to keep you entertained and happy.

### **About Me**

For those new to me or my reviews... here's the scoop: I read A LOT. I write A LOT. And now I blog A LOT. First the book review goes on Goodreads, and then I send it on over to my WordPress blog at <https://thisismytruthnow.com>, where you'll also find TV & Film reviews, the revealing and introspective 365 Daily Challenge and lots of blogging about places I've visited all over the world. And you can find all my social media profiles to get the details on the who/what/when/where and my pictures. Leave a comment and let me know what you think. Vote in the poll and ratings. Thanks for stopping by. *Note:* All written content is my original creation and copyrighted to me, but the graphics and images were linked from other sites and belong to them. Many thanks to their original creators.

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## Sarah says

15/1 - Finally, a mystery that doesn't end with Kinsey being seriously injured by the bad guy. I don't know how she could physically survive the injuries she sustained in B is for Burglar (injuries which required some time in hospital and weeks/months of physical therapy), and still be recovering when she is seriously injured again at the end of C is for Corpse. It kind of reminds me of the indestructibility of Bruce Willis in Die Hard and how impossible it would really be for either of them to keep going after the injuries they had (the ones you could see, not even counting the internal ones you can't). But I really, really like Kinsey and so I don't care that she has the unbelievable indestructibleness of a terminator. I just want to keep reading the mysteries, none of which I've been able to solve before Kinsey does. I was pleased to learn more about the death of Kinsey's parents and the aunt who raised her. Kinsey's living arrangements and general life are the complete opposite to my life, and although I know I wouldn't enjoy the reality I do enjoy reading about her love of her tiny ex-garage apartment and her determination to go running whenever, wherever possible. I do like Kinsey's determined singlehood - I can't stand female characters who spend their books chasing men around, even in a romance I like the heroines to be sassy and independent (as much as possible within the usual romance era).

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