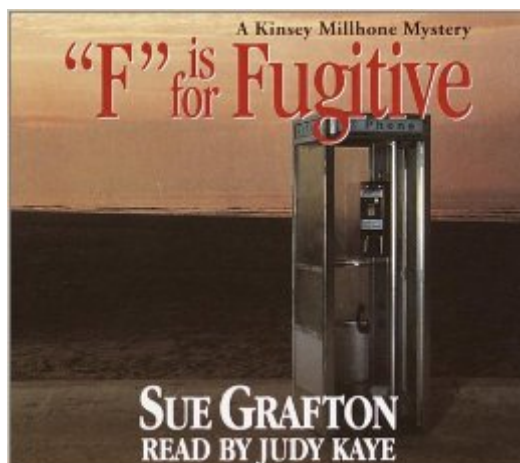


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"F" Is For Fugitive (A Kinsey Millhone Mystery) (Sue Grafton)



Synopsis

Everyone knew the kind of girl Jean Timberlake was -- ask anybody in the sleepy surf town of Floral Beach and they'd say Jean was wild, looking for trouble. But she certainly wasn't looking for murder. She was found dead on the beach seventeen years ago, and a rowdy ex-boyfriend named Bailey Fowler was convicted of her murder and imprisoned -- and then Bailey escaped. Now private eye Kinsey Millhone steps into a case that should have never been closed, in a town where there's no such thing as a private investigation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"F is for Fugitive" is one of the better Kinsey mysteries: engrossing from the first chapter, it reads quickly and consistently. Although the book is 300 pages long - longer than most of Grafton's novels - there is no mid-story lull. It bypasses much of Kinsey's usual backdrop: the action takes place in a small town ninety miles away from Santa Teresa, so Henry Pitts, Rosie, the California Fidelity crew, and Kinsey's bachelorette life in her small apartment are peripheral or entirely absent from the story. The book focuses entirely on the mystery of an twenty-year-old murder in a small town and a cast of characters who all seem to have something to hide. It's quintessential Sue Grafton: suspenseful and well-written, a pleasure to read from beginning to end.

It is probably pretty easy to write a book where a one-dimensional, uninteresting protagonist solves an easy mystery. It would be harder to write one where that same character solves an intriguing

mystery, or where an interesting, multi-faceted protagonist solves a boring mystery. It is perhaps easiest of all to baffle the readers throughout, then pull a rabbit out of the hat at the end, trying to be clever. Sue Grafton does not take any of these easy routes. Kinsey Millhone is a very interesting, believable, just plain human, character. The mystery in this 6th installment plays fair. Until the very end, you have several choices of who the culprit might be. The actual killer was not a total surprise, but wasn't one of the ones I was thinking were most likely. I enjoyed this book, and I recommend it highly. By the time I get a chance to read the rest of the current books, "O is for Outlaw" should be out, then I guess I will have to eagerly await each future book, just like those who have been reading this series all along.

Normally I truly relate to the main character, Kinsey Millhone, who is sufficiently offbeat to make me appreciate her. However, in this one there were so many references to fat and flab, and so many outright disparaging descriptions in general that I found myself entirely distracted from the story. I hadn't pegged Ms. Millhone as that shallow. The story itself was the typical riot, but it seemed to have less humor than previous ones. In "E", for example, I loved the relationship Millhone had with her pet policeman at the local station. Those descriptions were warm and human. These just seemed...snippy. Of course, there were still some laugh-out-loud moments. I think there always will be. I liked the idea of solving an old mystery and, while this took me two road trips to get through, I was satisfied by the end, which as always caught me by surprise. Onwards to "G" I go...

Sue Grafton's books are so GOOD that she makes mystery writing look easy. But it's not, she's just excellent at what she does. "F" takes Kinsey Millhone out of town to solve a 17-year-old murder case, and she's soon up to her ears in decades-old clues and crimes. One of the things Grafton does best is to create vivid and realistic communities of people. "F" is a great example of this--each character we meet is interesting, complex, AND has interactive relationships with other characters we've met. Everyone's connected, and when Kinsey solves the mystery, it makes sense because it FITS the characters. My only (minor) complaints are that I missed the usual cast of characters (especially that Hungarian-type woman at the bar where Kinsey eats) and that Grafton indulges in a little moralizing at the end, which seemed heavy-handed.

Kinsey Millhone is the star of author Sue Grafton's alphabet series of murder mysteries. F is for Fugitive is a fast paced, well written absorbing page flipping story: The Plot: Kinsey Millhone is a 30something PI living in the fictional town of Santa Teresa California. She is hired by Royce Fowler

a motel owner in the small northern California town of Floral Beach. Royce's son Bailey has just escaped from prison where he was serving time for the murder of Jean Timberlake. Jean was a seventeen year old town tramp who was found dead on the beach after being strangled to death. She was pregnant at the time of her murder. Royce wants Kinsey to investigate the crime. The result is an exciting tale where town secrets are revealed and two more persons are murdered. Along the way we learn of secret love affairs and a murderer who is adept with a shotgun. To reveal more is to spoil this riveting tale of a murderer brought to justice. The story is rich in atmosphere, character development and plot surprises. A is the grade for this fine murder mystery by one of the masters of the genre. Enjoy!

Seventeen years ago, Jean Timberlake (a promiscuous, six-weeks-pregnant high schooler) was murdered on the shore of Floral Beach, California, apparently by her ex-boyfriend, Bailey Fowler, who was consequently sent to prison. However, after repeated escapes--and spending much of his time out of the picture in this book--Kinsey Millhone, the 32-year-old no-nonsense private investigator, is hired by his father to investigate Jean's death and hopefully prove Bailey's innocence. "F' is for Fugitive" is yet another enjoyable Kinsey Millhone mystery with lots of quirky characters, particularly Bailey Fowler's family, who own the motel near where Jean was killed. It's also Kinsey's temporary residence while her apartment is being rebuilt after the happenings in the previous book ("E' is for Evidence"). "F' is for Fugitive" is relatively fast paced and has a more rounded ending than in some of Grafton's other books. And, as usual, I enjoyed Kinsey's sarcastic humor and refreshing first person narrative. Worth reading if you're into this alphabet mystery series.

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