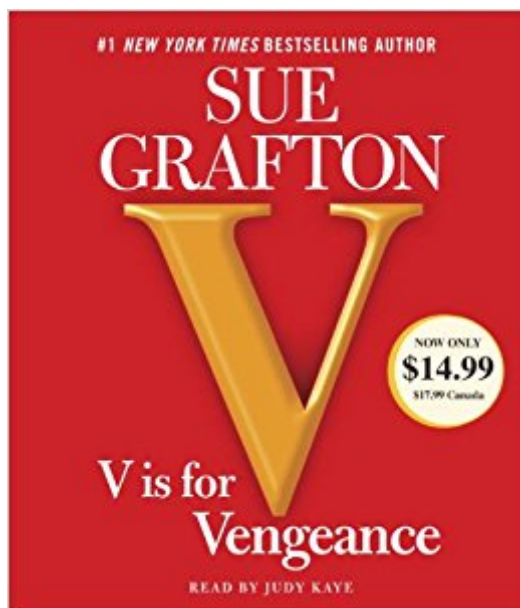


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V Is For Vengeance (A Kinsey Millhone Novel)



Synopsis

A woman with a murky past who kills herself— or was it murder? A spoiled kid awash in gambling debt who thinks he can beat the system. A lovely woman whose life is about to splinter into a thousand fragments. A professional shoplifting ring working for the Mob, racking up millions from stolen goods. A wandering husband, rich and ruthless. A dirty cop so entrenched on the force he is immune to exposure. A sinister gangster, conscienceless and brutal. A lonely widower mourning the death of his lover, desperate for answers, which may be worse than the pain of his loss. A private detective, Kinsey Millhone, whose thirty-eighth-birthday gift is a punch in the face that leaves her with two black eyes and a busted nose. And an elegant and powerful businessman whose dealings are definitely outside the law: the magus at the center of the web. V: Victim. Violence. Vengeance.

Book Information

Series: A Kinsey Millhone Novel (Book 22)

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Customer Reviews

Exclusive: A Letter from Sue Grafton

Praise for V is for Vengeance: "Sure to satisfy."—USA Today "Central to the books' appeal is not the hoodlums and their crimes—which are often fueled by alcohol or stupidity rather than the epic, high-stakes evil driving other crime books—but rather Kinsey herself. She is witty and weary and a lot of fun."—Los Angeles Times "One of Kinsey Millhone's best outings—must reading for Grafton

fans. • The Globe and Mail (Canada) "Grafton exhibits the pace, form, and technique of a marathon champ in her latest. • The Kansas City Star "The author has hit a high mark with her latest offering, a complex tale of love, betrayal, ambition, and, of course, murder. The only bad thing: There are just four letters left in the alphabet. • The Associated Press "Terrific. • Booklist --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

I started reading these in 1986 and I have enjoyed them all but this one is my favorite in a long time. I like the way Grafton used Kinsey in this one. She had her make some uncharacteristically dumb decisions to put us, the readers, where we needed to be to let other character's stories unfold. I found myself yelling, "don't go in there," and had to laugh, I don't remember the last time I yelled at a book.

I only read a few mystery series, only by women, so I don't know if the series written by men have this phenomenon, but Grafton is a good example of what I've seen with a couple of female mystery writers. Her series started off with books that were lean and economical, with engaging characters and a healthy dose of humor. By now, however, she has become overly ambitious and her writing is indulgent and the book is bloated. She started this writing from several different characters' points of view a few books ago and it served her well in a couple of books, but in "U is for Undertow" and this one, it just slows down the plot and serves to distract the reader from the central mystery and from the character of Kinsey. Maybe Grafton is bored with Kinsey? She hasn't evolved very much over the 20+ books, except to get more self-righteous and moralistic. Her relationships with her friends haven't evolved, either. Anyway, as long as the characters whose points of view she is writing from are interesting, I can tolerate it, but in this book, she has one character who is dull and unsympathetic, the spoiled and wealthy housewife, Nora. I'm not sure Grafton has the skill to build a character by writing from their point of view in third person (I noticed this in a couple of the previous books), though she does a good job with Dante. Nora, however, has such a bland and boring writing style that I skipped half of her chapters. Her actions are inexplicable, partly because she is so poorly drawn as a character. I didn't like her and found her unsympathetic. I felt sorry for Dante at the end. I also don't like the stuffy moralizing that Kinsey does. She certainly isn't averse to breaking the law and counts several law-breakers among her friends, including the character of Pinky Ford in this book. However, she excoriates the murder victim for contributing to the problem of shoplifting (yeah, like Nordstrom's is losing money) and yet likes Dante, who is the mastermind and leader of the

entire shoplifting racket, whereas Audrey was just a cog in the machine. Dante was also a hood who had probably killed people and done other horrible things, but he was drawn as being a great guy. BTW, if anybody was interesting enough to write from his point of view, it was Pinky. I really liked him. And, yeah, Grafton does go into excessive detail about every move Kinsey makes (opening doors, eating, turning on lights, etc.). Is she paid by the word, like Victor Hugo?

First of all let me say I HATE!!!!!!!!!!!! making me fill in these blocks just so I can make a comment. Often none of them apply. , stop this stupidity. I hate it. Now, about the book, while I've accidentally read this before without realizing it, it's still good. All of her books are good. I just finished "U" and thought it was one of her best books to date. I will soon have read all that she has published. I hope she doesn't stop at Z. Worry a little about that.

Please don't start the series with "V". Part of the joy of the newer installments to the Alphabet series is that they are placed in a time before cell phones. Ms. Grafton is almost writing an historical novel as well as a "Noir" mystery from a female narrator. "Santa Teresa" is the fictional name for the Santa Barbara equivalent as far as setting. Those of us lucky enough to have been to S.B. will transfer the strange love that the most California of Edens evokes. Yes, there is wealth there, but it is contained within a small town that has outgrown its "britches". Kinsey, the protagonist, lives on the fringes and survives by her wits and is compromised by her big heart. From crime bosses to loser thieves, we are treated to a pantheon of wonderful characters from who we hear their thoughts and ambitions. This is the best example of Ms. Grafton's writing skill in this genre. I'm saving "W" for the airplane to France.

I've been reading Kinsey Milhone books since I was in high school (I'm Kinsey's age now) and I've never missed one. And I will read all of them until the end. V is for Vengeance was not one of the strongest. Can't remember which one was the one I disliked more, R is for Ricochet or Q. Strangely enough in this edition, I found the Kinsey segments to be the most boring. I find William to be a crazy, meddling old man, Henry was shipped off immediately in the beginning so he was totally inconsequential, and Rosie has annoyed me from book 'A'. I was far more interested to read about Dante and Nora (laughed out loud in some parts), and I appreciated the twist/link between them when it was revealed. Didn't see that one coming. But there could've been better 'meat' around their story. The first chapter was a knockout and drew me right in. Afterwards the book lost steam, and I wanted to punch Kinsey and give her two black eyes myself about midway through the book. And

Kinsey has never annoyed/bored me before. Her self-righteousness about shoplifters in a store, her loyalty to Pinky and his shenanigans, her nosy insistence on getting in the middle of the whole Pinky and Cappi duel, the whole boring story with Len, and I didn't get her deal with Diana Alavarez. Did she like her wardrobe or NOT? And these are just a few things I'm listing. I can appreciate Sue Grafton's honesty to her readers, revealing her struggle in coming up with a plot, but I shouldn't have had to say to myself: yeahhhh, Sue. Nevertheless, as I said, I will see it to the end. I still love the series and look forward to the next book.

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