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X (Kinsey Millhone)



Synopsis

Of #1 New York Times "bestselling author Sue Grafton, NPR's Maureen Corrigan said, "Makes me wish there were more than 26 letters." • With only two letters left, Grafton's many devoted readers will share that sentiment. X: The number ten. An unknown quantity. A mistake. A cross. A kiss. X: The shortest entry in Webster's Unabridged. Derived from Greek and Latin and commonly found in science, medicine, and religion. The most graphically dramatic letter. Notoriously tricky to pronounce: think xylophone. X: The twenty-fourth letter in the English alphabet. Sue Grafton's X: Perhaps her darkest and most chilling novel, it features a remorseless serial killer who leaves no trace of his crimes. Once again breaking the rules and establishing new paths, Grafton wastes little time identifying this sociopath. The test is whether Kinsey can prove her case against him before she becomes his next victim. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Having given five stars in past to almost all the previous books in the series, I could not imagine one that would rate this low with two stars. I have devoured the previous Kinsey Millhone books and when they concluded, felt it was not only a good read but a good use of my time--and I always felt that Grafton had delivered. This time? Not so much. I can't imagine Sue Grafton letting anyone else write in this series (even parts or the entire book) as some reviewers have speculated here, but something is definitely off with this book as compared with those that preceded it. In the past, I've never ever felt bored or found a book lacking tension or its equivalent. I had to force myself to keep

reading, believing, wrongly, that the plot really would develop and take on momentum. Maybe this is a style of writing today as I've now read (but did not finish, the first time ever) two other "mysteries" where literally NOTHING happened for close to 300 pages of a 450-page book. Seriously. I finished this book and as it came towards the "end" I thought I might have a book with missing pages. I'm not kidding. I could not believe we were at the end and with such an ending. This time around, a whole mess of, to me, trivial subplots (the California drought, the issue with Henry's neighbors, which I won't reveal in case someone reading this wants to read the book or is not finished, the angry and vindictive ex-wife who put one over on Kinsey) and almost no character development or character interaction beyond really minor stuff left me wondering: What is going on here? Or, more appropriately, what is NOT going on. Disappointed is to put it mildly. But hey, one book out of 24 not up to par...

Sue Grafton's latest Kinsey Millhone novel, "X," takes place in 1989, before the advent of high-speed Internet and cell-phones. Thirty-eight year old Kinsey is a private investigator whose client list has shrunk. However, thanks to a tidy nest egg, she has the freedom to pursue inquiries that interest her. Two complex matters come along, one involving Pete Wolinsky, a private eye with whom Kinsey once worked. Pete's widow, Ruth, asks Kinsey to restore order to her late husband's chaotic files, since the IRS is threatening to conduct an audit. Kinsey agrees to do what she can, but soon discovers surprising information that sheds light on a series of troubling events from the past. In addition, a socialite hires Kinsey to obtain contact information for a recently released ex-convict. On the home front, Kinsey and her elderly landlord, Henry, are stuck with a troublesome pair of needy new neighbors, Joseph and Edna Shallenbarger. There is something fishy about these two, but Kinsey cannot put her finger on what it is that arouses her suspicion. "X" may refer to Teddy and Ari Xanakis, a wealthy couple who have gone through a contentious divorce. Later, Kinsey will have an opportunity to speak to each of them. Millhone lives in the fictional California town of Santa Teresa, dresses simply, lives frugally, and is proud of her miserly ways. Her passion is tracking down "life's cheaters." She is revolted by the fact that so many villains get away with their crimes. "My mission is to eradicate the lot of them," she declares. To this end, Kinsey tails suspects, conducts surveillance, unearths old records with the help of a friendly librarian, interviews cops, and tracks down anyone else who might have vital information.

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