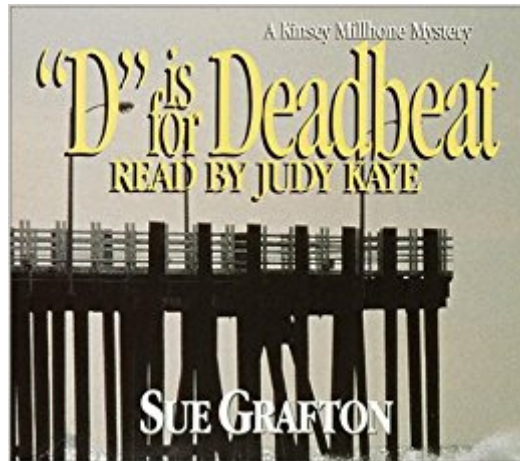




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# "D" Is For Deadbeat: A Kinsey Milhone Mystery (Sue Grafton)



## Synopsis

The client came to Kinsey Millhone with an easy job -- just deliver \$25,000 to a fifteen-year-old kid. A little odd, and a little too easy, but Kinsey took Alvin Limardo's retainer check anyway. It turned out to be as phony as he was. In real life, his name was John Daggett, a chronic drunk with a record as long as your arm and a reputation for sleazy deals. But he wasn't just a deadbeat. By the time Kinsey caught up with him, he was a dead body -- with a whole host of people who were delighted to hear the news. But how do you make a stiff pay up what he owes you?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"D" is for Detective Kinsey Millhone, given \$25,000 of stolen drug money by a drunkard named Daggett who then dies in a drowning. When she decides to deliver the money to Daggett's designee, a young man who was the sole survivor of an auto accident perpetrated by Daggett, Kinsey finds herself in a dilemma: too many "D's" are after the loot. There are two Mrs. Daggetts, a daughter, the drug dealers and a determined killer who soon claims a second life. At this point, Grafton's lively, well-written adventure develops a deadly flaw. Kinsey comes upon the second victim shortly after he's been shot. Though dying, he is conscious and coherent. Why, then, doesn't she ask who did it? When asked the same thing by the police, she says, "I didn't want the last minutes of his life taken up with that stuff" a humane but unlikely rejoinder from any private eye. Even so, the pleasure of this story comes through. Let's give it a "D" for Dandy. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

"Bright, brisk and thoroughly engaging." -- The Washington Post.

What can I say? By the time Sue Grafton reached "D," she had pretty much solidified the format of the Kinsey Millhone series. (I've read just about the whole series, but had skipped this one for some reason.) I just finished this book a few minutes ago, and I can't say that I'm reverberating with satisfaction for having spent the time reading it. But, then again, I don't suppose one reads this genre for self-improvement. Although, when I finish one of the "Bruno, Chief of Police" stories, I have absorbed information about French cuisine, culture, archaeology, wines, truffles, and a very sympathetic character that is Bruno. Not so with the Grafton books. And, I wish someone would explain to me why the stories' locale of Santa Barbara's identity is thinly veiled as "Santa Teresa" (and Goleta's as "Colgate), when towns to the north and south carry their real names and locations? Perhaps Grafton knew that wealthy people are litigious people?

Disclaimer: I am a mystery fanatic, and thought I had read all the good stuff. Then I discovered Sue Grafton and her unsinkable lady detective Kinsey Millhone. The books are alphabetical! I have read "A" through "D" and intend to work my way through the rest of the alphabet. Though these books seem to be aimed at a female audience, I find them quite engaging: great plots, lots of red herrings, very well written, and an amazing assortment of plausible yet sketchy characters (and I am only up to book "D"). Further, unlike many serial mysteries, each book, so far, is notably different from its predecessors and holds its own well. Hope Ms. Grafton can keep it up. Her redoubtable lady detective, Kinsey Millhone, is daring, dogged, and amazingly resilient, but a completely plausible character.

Sue Grafton takes a different approach to writing mysteries. Instead of writing super fast, graphic thrillers, she instead constructs a story around pure mystery, leaving the reader wondering how it would be possible for her lead - private eye Kinsey Millhone - to find the truth. But when the truth does come, there is no warning. Suddenly, the tension hits you, then keeps building to a crescendo. In the fourth book in Alphabet series, Kinsey encounters a deadbeat who asks her to find someone for him and give him a cheque as compensation for an accident years ago. But this is Kinsey we're talking about here, so it's not long before things unravel. The client goes missing, the check bounces, and Kinsey finds herself facing a web of lies including bigamy and criminality spreading from Santa Teresa to LA and to the infamous San Quentin prison. Where, in all this, does

the truth lie. When it finally arrives, it will devastate you. Grafton keeps her prose simple, but the plot complicated enough to stop you figuring it out ahead of time. She makes it feel as though everyone is guilty, and it works perfectly here. For those of you who enjoy an older style of mystery, you can't go past "D is for Deadbeat".

Oh it's a Sue and Kinsey collaboration. If you hate it then read Shakespeare, or Homer (in the original Greek). It's The Sue! And The Kinsey who refuses to buy a new black dress or spend \$20 for a nice haircut. A good read with a charm all its own. Very fun and a speedy read. Waiting for the "Y" book. And, Sue, note that Kinsey BETTER be happy! Ya hear?

I started reading Sue Grafton's mysteries starring private investigator, Kinsey Millhone in the middle of the alphabet, went forward to 'V' and then backed up to 'A.' "'D' is for Deadbeat" is the final entry I can read until 'W' comes out, and during this process I've gotten to know Grafton's private eye as well as any friend. I fantasize that someday we'll get together under the Golden Arches for a couple of quarter-pounders with cheese and an order of fries. Warning: this series could turn you into a junk food addict. Grafton puts together a competent mystery, but her forte is character development. Kinsey's running commentary on the people in her life is rude, funny, and right-on. If you read this series long enough, you will find your own foibles described--whether you bite your nails, obsessively stroke your mustache, wear too much eye make-up, or try to comb those few remaining strands of hair over your bald spot. It might hurt, but you'll be laughing, especially since Kinsey herself generally slouches around in an old tee shirt and jeans, and cuts her own hair with a pair of nail scissors. SHE doesn't care what WE think. The author's acute eye for the telling detail is especially obvious at the funeral for the eponymous deadbeat: "From somewhere near the back, a woman hollered out "Yes, Lord!" and a second woman yelled out "Bullshiit!" in just about the same tone. The minister, not hearing that well, apparently took both as spiritual punctuation marks, Biblical whoopees to incite him to greater eloquence..." Kinsey takes on the task of locating someone who is to be the recipient of a large cashier's check. Many books in this series deal with California's upper crust, but 'D' is about the bottom-feeders--the trailer trash of the Golden State. When her client is found floating face-down in the surf, she also takes on the job of finding his killer. This isn't the best mystery in this series--the murderer is too easy to finger--but Kinsey fans will enjoy learning the rules by which their favorite detective was raised up by her maiden aunt: "When I was in high school, she'd called Home Ec 'Home Ick' and applauded when I got a D. She thought it would make a lot more sense if the boys took Home Ec and the girls took Auto Mechanics and

Wood Shop."Right on, Aunt Gin!

I love all of the Sue Grafton books. I have read the majority of this series and have not been let down yet

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