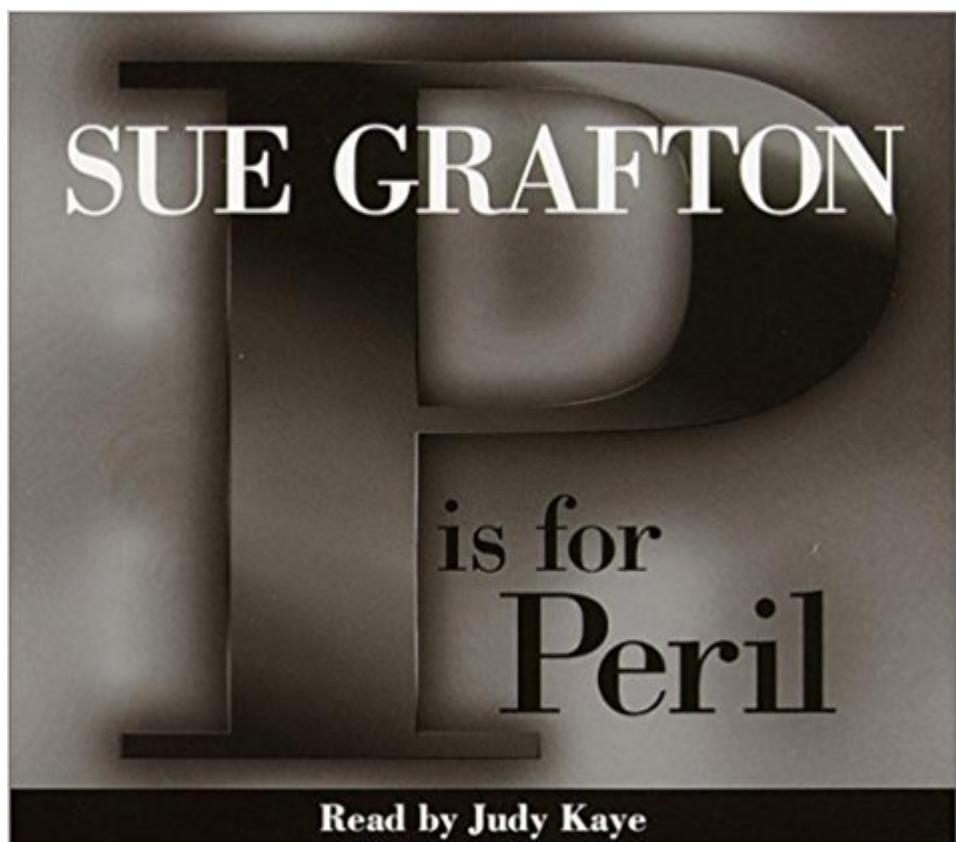


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# P Is For Peril: A Kinsey Milhone Mystery (Sue Grafton)



## Synopsis

Dr. Dowan Purcell had been missing for nine weeks when Kinsey got a call asking her to take on the case. A specialist in geriatric medicine, Purcell was a prominent member of the Santa Theresa medical community, and the police had done a thorough job. Purcell had no known enemies and seemed content with his life. At the time of his disappearance, he was running a nursing care facility where both the staff and the patients loved him. He adored his second wife, Crystal, and doted on their two-year-old son. It wasn't Crystal who called Kinsey. It was Purcell's ex-wife, Fiona. Everything about their meeting made Kinsey uneasy. Fiona's manner was high-handed and her expectations unrealistic. Kinsey's instincts told her to refuse the job, yet she ended up saying, "I'll do what I can, but I make no promises." It was a decision she'd live to regret. Pursuing the mysterious disappearance of Purcell, Kinsey crashes into a wall of speculation. It seems everyone has a theory. The cops think he went on a bender and is too ashamed to come home. Fiona is sure he ran off to get away from Crystal, and Crystal is just as sure he's dead. The staff at the nursing home is convinced he's been kidnapped, and one of his daughters, having consulted a psychic, is certain that he's trapped in a dark place, though she doesn't know where. Kinsey is awash in explanations and sorely lacking in facts. Then pure chance leads her in another direction, and she soon finds herself in a dangerous shadow land, where duplicity and double-dealing are the reality and, with the truth glinting elusively out of reach, she must stake her life on a thin thread of intuition. *P Is for Peril*: Kinsey Millhone's latest venture into the darker side of the human soul.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Dowan Purcell, a respected physician who operates a nursing home, disappears, his ex-wife hires Santa Teresa PI Kinsey Millhone to look into it. Fiona Purcell is still seething over Dow's affair and subsequent marriage to Crystal, a former stripper, yet they're still friends, and she seems worried. But when his body is discovered, she's among the suspects. Both of Dow's wives, at least one of his business partners, and perhaps even Crystal's teenage daughter had motives to kill. While in her most recent adventures (*N Is for Noose, O Is for Outlaw*) Kinsey has acquired new digs, an extended family, and a few more gray hairs, in this one (which takes place some time in the mid-'80s), she's 36, still living in the remodeled garage that was blown up in an earlier novel. Easier than a facelift, and while Sue Grafton is a solid enough writer to pull it off, dedicated Kinsey fans will miss the more complex and multidimensional character who aged so ruefully and interestingly in the '90s. This isn't Grafton's strongest case; it's hard to care about any of Purcell's women or his associates. More exciting is the secondary plot, which involves a handsome landlord who offers Kinsey the new office space she's been seeking and turns out to be a lot more trouble than she bargained for. Despite its somewhat plodding pace and the echo of a more evolved heroine that rings through its pages, Grafton's many fans will probably shoot *P Is for Peril* right to the top of the bestseller list. --Jane Adams --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

PI Kinsey Millhone's trademark dry sense of humor is largely absent in the first half of the 15th book in this justifiably popular series, though it resurfaces as the suspense finally begins to build in the second half. In the bleak November of 1986, Kinsey looks into the disappearance of Dr. Dowan Purcell, who's been missing for nine weeks. Dr. Purcell is an elderly physician who runs a nursing home that's being investigated for Medicare fraud. His ex-wife, Fiona, hires Kinsey when it seems as though the police have given up on the search. Fiona thinks that he could be simply hiding out somewhere, especially since he's pulled a disappearance stunt twice before. However, Purcell's current wife, Crystal, believes that he may be dead. Kinsey is dubious about finding any new leads after so much time has elapsed. She's also worried about having to move out of the office space she now occupies in the suite owned by her lawyer, and between her interviews with suspects she tries to rent a new office from a pair of brothers whose mysterious background begins to make her suspicious. Grafton's Santa Teresa seems more like Ross Macdonald's town of the same name than ever before, with dysfunctional families everywhere jostling for the private eye's attention. The

novel has a hard-edged, wintry ambience, echoed in Fiona Purcell's obsession with angular art deco furniture and architecture. Unfortunately, Grafton's evocation of the noir crime novels and styles of the 1940s, although atmospheric, doesn't make up for a lack of suspense and lackluster characters. (June 4)Forecast: With a 600,000-copy first printing and a national author tour, this Literary Guild Main Selection is sure to shoot well up the bestseller lists. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ms. Grafton's writing style of the character, Kinsey Millhone, is good as usual. She peppers a novel with wit and vivid descriptions. I'm not so sure she actually finished this story, or should have kept on writing until she actually reached an actual conclusion. The novel has both a plot and a very good subplot. The subplot finishes off pretty well. The main plot, not so well. She leaves unanswered questions and loose ends which need to be tied up. After finishing, I knew who did it, but was left wondering why. There's a blurb of a sentence in which a secondary character joins a main character and the reader can read whatever into the relationship of the two. It's a sentence or two which appears from nowhere. The reader never really is answered as to why the crime took place. There's a nice little serene finish on the last page, but it doesn't atone for the plot's void. Oh, don't expect a "Respectfully yours" epilogue to help wrap the novel either. There isn't one.

Unsolved. I really enjoy Sue Grafton's work but this one left questions unanswered. Interesting storyline, believable characters and realistic dialogue. No desire to re-read this story. I am always interested in works by this author.

I am new to this series compared to many other reviewers. Have read them in order and really liked this one up to the end, which left me scratching my head. Have so many questions left unanswered. Just one involves the two murderous brothers and the "insurance investigator" who wasn't. If the brothers were the only ones who had the combination to the safe, how did the phony investigator get the jewels out of it? And what was the point of involving Kinsey? There are many other questions left unanswered by this one. When you read the professional reviews provided, all of which praise this book and the author, you can't help but wonder if any of them actually READ this book. You would think someone would have noticed all the holes.

Sue Grafton never fails to have an enticing ending. She has sculpted her character, Kinsey Millhone, into a friend of the reader. You can't help but learn to love her particular characteristics

that make her so real. She fills her with real feelings we might all have or at least know someone with the same character flaws, inhibitions, dogged determinations and reflections of others do easy to relate to. And she winds these stories so effortlessly around Kinsey's personality traits, keeping us all either waiting in breathless concern or scratching our heads, pondering as Kinsey does as to the next step to take in her search for the truth.

I did not get an ending...just a lot of questions. It was like someone forgot to put the last chapter in before printing.

Have always enjoyed all of Kinsey's adventures, predicaments, and foibles. Loved this story with the major plot and sub(plots). But this was the first time where after reading the last line of the book, it was like 'is that all there is?' There was no epilogue or 'Respectfully Yours' so it felt like there were a few loose threads. I chuckled where one reviewer said they went to the bookstore to check if they were missing THE last chapter. I felt exactly the same way. Having said that, I still highly recommend 'P is for Peril' for all Kinsey Millhone fans.

I've never read a Sue Grafton book that I didn't enjoy - or look forward to reading again, for that matter! This is the first time I've tried the Kindle edition, even though I own literally thousands of them. (I'm not exaggerating, there are so many priced at free or \$.99 - and this one was less than two bucks!) If you love mysteries and great storytelling, without the grim blood and gore, but laced with humour? This is your author. Any letter in her alphabet will make a believer out of you!  
;-)Jgtimm

Story was great till you got to the last page where it leaves you hanging with no finish to the story and or any epilogue. I was furious with Grafton for doing that to her readers when all her other books are terrific...I even went to the book store to see if my book was missing pages but after looking in the back of "P" that book was the same way....so this book doesn't even deserve a one star but the story is good, Grafton leaving you hanging really sucks....GAB

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