




Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief

Wendelin Van Draanen

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Grams always told her those binoculars would get her into trouble. Now Sammy's witnessed a crime at the Heavenly Hotel-a light fingered thief stealing \$4,000 from Madame Nashira, the astrologer with the fire-hazard hair-do. Thing is, while she was watching him, he was watching her, too...

Fast-paced and funny, packed with menacing suspects and clever clues, the Sammy Keyes mysteries keep you guessing to the last riveting page.

Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief Details

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Author : Wendelin Van Draanen

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From Reader Review Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief for online ebook

Troi says

Edit: I just read some of the reviews and I'm a little disappointed. Sammy does tell a lie or two in the book, but let's be honest: didn't you tell a lie once in a while when you were a kid. And tell me a book in which the character was absolutely perfect that you still love to the day. Sammy's lying is what we call a flaw and it's part of what makes her such an interesting character. The thing that bugs me the most about the reviews I just read, however, is that those of you upset about her lying didn't give the rest of the series a try. If you did, you would see her character grow and see that she eventually turns into a trustworthy and responsible young woman, despite the fact that she is only 12 years old! Sammy is a very real and relatable character, which is why I adore her so much.

Now, on with my original review.

Let me start this review by stating that I am a 20 year old woman and I have been reading the Sammy Keyes series since I was 13 years old and with each new novel published, Sammy is still my hero.

This is the first book in the Sammy Keyes series, although it is not the first one I read and you definitely don't need to read these in order. But this is one of my favorites of the series and I'm pretty sure I've read it over a dozen times. Its simplicity and the great characters that are expertly introduced in so little words make this book an easy and fun read.

The writing is definitely geared toward the junior high population, but I still enjoy it - and all the others - just as much as I did when I first read it. In a lot of books I've read that involve some sort of mystery that the protagonist stumbles upon while he/she is trying to juggle a crazy home life and a not so great social life, the parts where he/she is involved in the bigger, more life threatening mystery seem almost like the character is taking break from real life for a minute. But with Sammy Keyes, everything meshes so beautifully. I care just as much about whatever mess she's gotten herself into with her grams and her arch nemesis Heather as I do with whatever psycho she happened to wave at while he's stealing money from a hotel room across the street.

And Sammy may get into a lot of trouble, but she doesn't really mean to and she does her best to fix things up when she can. She's a character with a good heart, straight morals, and just a little too much courage to keep her out of trouble.

Like I said, Sammy is my hero and a great role model for girls and women everywhere. I'll be sad when her adventures come to an end.

Ronda says

Thirteen-year-old Sammy, who lives illegally at her grandmother's "seniors only" apartment sees a crime committed while she's looking through her binoculars—and the thief sees her. Booktalk: Sammy Keyes' life is already crazy. She's living illegally with her grandma in a seniors-only apartment complex while her mother tries to find an acting job out in California. While looking through her binoculars at the "seedy hotel" across the road—when her grandma has specifically told her NOT to be she sees someone who looks

vaguely familiar committing a crime and then, the thief sees her. No way the thief could be sure she saw him right? Well, maybe not if she hadn't waved at him. To complicate things, her grandma's neighbor has taken to spying on the apartment trying to prove that Sammy's living there, which means that Sammy and her grandma have to get pretty creative to get Sammy in and out. Oh, and did I tell you that, on the first day of middle school, Sammy gets poked in the butt with a pin and gets suspended? Will the neighbor catch Sammy? Will the thief figure out who she is and come after her? Will her entire seventh grade year come crashing down around her? Read *Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief* by Wendelin Van Draanen to find out.

Notes: As an avid mystery fan, I am all too often looking for a new series to read when I "catch up" with a favorite author's latest. Looking at the genesis of this illness, I realized that it started in elementary school when I got hooked on two mystery series--the *Three Investigators* (Hitchcock) and *Nancy Drew* (Keane). Reading each new book in those two series was like having a mini-reunion with old friends. *Sammy Keyes* promises to be a series and a character well worth revisiting.

Ashley Greene says

Sammy Keyes is a middle-school girl living illegally with her grandmother in a seniors-only high-rise in California. Her mother is away trying to make it as a Hollywood actress. One afternoon, trying to occupy her time, she gets out her grandmother's binoculars and starts scanning neighboring buildings – and becomes a witness to a burglary in the Heavenly Hotel! There are a series of burglaries in the neighborhood, and Sammy just spotted the latest one. When the burglar catches sight of Sammy watching him, what does she do? She waves! This fun mystery novel follows Sammy's wild ride as she tries to identify the burglar before he finds her. And with the police poking around, she can't let them find out her illegal living situation. Adding to the complexities in Sammy's life, she just made enemies with the popular girl at school and got suspended on the first day of seventh grade. She needs to solve this crime before more gets out of hand! Sammy is observant, smart, funny, and seems to know how to get herself into trouble – deep trouble. Can she help solve this crime and undo some of the trouble, too?

Wendelin Van Drannen is an award-winning author; this book won the Edgar Allen Poe Award for best children's mystery. There are 18 books in this series. Van Drannen used to be a school teacher – she certainly knows what kids like!

I would recommend this book for upper elementary grades. This book could be used as a genre example to introduce mystery writing. Students could describe what the mystery is, what plot problems need solving, and what clues were helpful in solving the crime. This book would also be a great book to read in conjunction with a forensic science unit where students are studying crime-solving science such as fingerprints, shoe tracks, and handwriting analysis. As a read-aloud, this is a great way to introduce students to mysteries and get them hooked on this very fun series!

Lisa says

Sammy Keyes mystery series, how do I love thee? Let me count the ways--well, I CAN'T because you are so WONDERFULLY AMAZING. I want to put every book in your whole dang series on my favorites shelf, but I know I shouldn't because that would be excessive. But here are just a few of the things I love about

you:

I love how Sammy, 12 year-old solver of small town crimes, never wastes time worrying about how pretty or thin she is, despite being in the high-peer-pressure world of middle school. Her appearance is totally irrelevant to her--what matters is her brains, her heart, and her guts.

I love how Sammy is not afraid of bugs or dark alleys or heights, and plunges into danger head-on.

I love how Sammy is nice to the weak, mean to the wicked, and sometimes even nice to the wicked.

There're just too many things about this series that I like to name them all! In any case, I'm excited to read the rest of the series.

Hafsa Sabira says

Not a favourite one. Too many factors to get over with this story.

Firstly, the plot is too simple and doesn't even begin to unfold until almost the first half of the book is over. Secondly, there are so many sub plots in the main plot. The main plot is catching a robber who continues to steal money and valuable things from the locality. The sub plots include many incidents in Sammy's personal life. The way I felt here, is that the writer focused more on portraying the characters than focusing on finding the thief. As the title suggests a mystery story, I felt very much disappointed at the extra life events. It became Samantha's daily life rather than Samantha being sort of an investigator.

Even though the last part of the story is quite good, overall it doesn't go that well with the genre. Hence, the 2 stars.

Sarah says

I enjoyed this book, not as much as Gilda Joyce, but it was cute. Initially I thought that Stacy lived in New York, then later realized she lived in a very neat little town with a school on School St. and a church on Church St. One thing though is that it seemed dated. There is talk about her wanting a new walkman... in 1998. I think that should have been a discman. And how the police seem to have no grasp of CPS or databases. Oh you know that guys Parol officer has been looking for him, but a 7th grader figured out where he was... Or when they want to talk to Marissa and Samantha's parents and they just tell them they can't they're working late.

Sarah says

Always good when we can find one everyone likes while in the car! Also, not too long. Great mystery.

Aurora Dimitre says

As always, Sammy Keyes just opens my heart and fills it with joy.

Nivedith says

A good word to describe this book would be suspenseful. The author does an excellent job of creating suspense. Suspense was a huge strength to this book and it leaves the reader wanting to know what will happen next in the book. This mystery has a few twists and isn't easily solvable for the reader or for Sammy, which will keep reader interested. One weakness of the book was description such as the author could've used more description to the setting but that didn't affect the book a lot. The characters were unique such as Sammy Keyes, who lives illegally at her grandmother's which is at a senior apartments (seniors only) because her mom is not with her and Sammy sometimes has to break the rules to do what is right. In my opinion this book is just like Nancy Drew because they both are solving mysterious with twist in each of the books and I will continue to read the series. If you are looking for a book that will leave you on the edge of your seat then this is the one. In conclusion, I enjoyed this book because of the suspense the author created.

Allison says

Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief reminded me of a good old fashioned children's book from when I was a kid. I won't tell how long ago that was!

Sammy lives illegally with her grandmother in a seniors only apartment building and tries her best to stay under the radar. I don't think that's so easy when Sammy witnesses a burglary using her gram's binoculars. The burglar spots Sammy and now Sammy is not sure if he knows who she is. Then she's suspended from school for putting a mean girl in her place. She really doesn't have the time for that drama when she's trying to solve the burglary mystery.

This MG novel leaves me wanting to see what's up with Sammy in the future.

Many thanks to Wendelin Van Draanen for sharing Sammy adventures and crime solving skills,
Al Monte

Sarah BT says

Sammy Keyes is a Nancy Drew for a new generation. She's smart, funny, and very sassy with lots of spunk. Sammy has a temper and she's not always going to follow the rules, but that's part of her charm. Sammy will let you know what she thinks!

There's more than just mystery in the story. Sammy has to deal with a school bully and she learns to stick up for herself. She also is living (illegally) with her grandmother since her mother left to become an actress and Sammy has to sneak through the apartment complex.

The mystery has a few twists and isn't easily solvable, which will keep readers interested. Sammy is in

middle school and middle-grade readers are the target audience, but I do think older readers would enjoy this series.

Sammy is surrounded by a wonderful cast of characters-Madama Narisha, the astrologist whose money was stolen, the officers trying to solve the crime who don't believe a kid could help, and Sammy's best friend, Marissa, whose family money is a burden more than a blessing. The supporting cast is richly drawn-they are not stock characters and that adds to the story.

In the School Library Journal, the reviewer suggested pairing this one with Bruce Coville's *The Ghost in the Big Brass Bed*, which was one of my favorite reads in elementary school. So it's no wonder I fell in love with Sammy Keyes! *Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief* is a great start to what looks like a fun-filled series. I would recommend this one to readers looking for a lighter mystery read.

Sarah says

"*Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief*" by Wendelin Van Draanen is about a girl named Samantha (known as Sammy) lives with her Grandma. Her Grandmother told her that binoculars would get her into trouble. One day Sammy took her binoculars and she was watching her neighborhood. Till she saw this guy in his mid 40's with a black coat and gloves stealing money from a woman. Instead, of telling her Grandmother she did the dumbest thing ever, she waved at him! After a few minutes, she tried to tell someone but they wouldn't believe her. Will Sammy find out who is that thief? I recommend this book to people who like adventure and mystery.

Arielle Walker says

May 2016: So it took me a while to get back around to this but so, so glad I did. Just as good as I remembered - great little plot twists, fantastic lead characters and surprisingly plausible storyline, and despite the rather huge age gap (pretty sure this is both for and about 12 year olds) I really enjoyed reading it again.

Jan 2016: Haven't read this in nearly a decade (scary thought, that) and remember the series as being really great, might give it another go and who cares if it's "too young" - if it's good, it's good!

Erin says

3.5 stars

Sammy Keyes lives with her Grandma in a seniors-only apartment when one day she catches someone stealing money from one of the hotel rooms across the street. There are a number of burglaries that follow and leave everyone a little anxious for this individual to be caught.

This really did entertain me. Sammy is a spunky individual who is ready to stand up for herself and those she cares about and boy is she curious. I couldn't help but love her more and more as I read on. She has so much life and I think the author did an excellent job of bringing that to light.

The mystery was fun, but I think it did take a while to build up and there were a lot of other things that happened that did distract from it. But, I didn't mind it because I thought it really brought to life not just the Sammy, but the other characters as well. It allowed them to have more depth than they might have otherwise.

heyling says

my absolute favorite book series while in elementary!
