



## Deadly Sanctuary

*Sylvia Nobel*

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## **Deadly Sanctuary** Sylvia Nobel

Beautiful, strong-willed reporter, Kendall O'Dell, is drawn into an evil web of conspiracy beyond anything she could have ever imagined when she accepts a position at a small newspaper in isolated Castle Valley, Arizona. Her assignment: Find out why her predecessor mysteriously vanished while working on a story concerning the unsolved deaths of two teenage girls. Why is the sheriff so hostile to her inquiries? Why is the woman operating the local shelter for homeless girls so secretive? And how is attractive rancher Bradley Talverson involved?

When the body of a third girl is discovered in the desert not far from a private mental institution, Kendall's life hangs in the balance as she strives to uncover the horrifying secret.

**Deadly Sanctuary** is the first title in Sylvia Nobel's popular mystery series, featuring spirited, flame-haired reporter Kendall O'Dell. The author's trademark style is to produce exciting, well-written, edge-of-your-seat, adventures with "knock your socks off" surprise endings. Her judicious use of language and lack of graphic sex and violence make her novels suitable from teens to seniors.

Author Biography: **Sylvia Nobel** is the award-winning author of the Kendall O'Dell mystery series and two romance novels, all set in Arizona. She is an accomplished public speaker and a member of Mystery Writers of America. She lives in Phoenix, AZ with her husband and seven cats.

## **Deadly Sanctuary Details**

Date : Published April 28th 1998 by Nite Owl Books (first published January 1st 1998)

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## From Reader Review Deadly Sanctuary for online ebook

### Stanley McShane says

Uh oh; know how some books you can just see what's going to happen and then, sure enough, it does? That's what happens with our heroine and her two suitors--the conundrum is in how she arrives at her choice. Still, in the meantime, you have Kendall O'Dell in Castle Valley, Arizona, relocated in part because of her asthma and on assignment at a local newspaper as an investigative reporter. I enjoyed for the most part her descriptions of the dry and hot southwest and having just spent my first winter as a "snowbird" (winter visitor! the better connotation) can relate to many of the comments concluding with the author the gradual and grudging love of the area; 180 degrees from everything you've always enjoyed but holding spellbound with a mysterious beauty of its own. The plot moves along quickly enough as it weaves the story in and out of greater and more sinister scenarios. Kendall vacillates between beaux (obviously NOT paying any attention to your insightful hints. The bad guys and girls just keep getting nastier until Kendall is forced to penetrate the secluded bastion holding the last vestige of secrets. Of course she is going to get caught, of course she'll land in a black hole, but of course she'll manage to escape--but how? Ah, that's what keeps you reading! Little plot twists that add spice ending in a real gully washer sure to separate the (bad) men from the (good) women. The ending neatly wraps it all up (a little too well--some things you just don't want or need to know), but on the whole a very enjoyable free BookBub offering. If you can go to a movie for pure escapism and come out satisfied and happy, you can read this book for the same.

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### Denise says

Oh my goodness what a mess Kendall gets herself into in this first book of the Kendall O'Dell series. The book is good but the story is kind of slow but then at the end, WOW, not only does it pick up speed but what an ending!!!

Mystery lovers should love this book/series.

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### Veronica Rosa says

Okay, I couldn't take it anymore. I got to about 30% and wanted to smack Kendall for being so dense. I figured out what was going on at the 22% mark and ugh! So I skipped to near the end and sure enough, my suspicions were correct... every single damn one of them.

The writing was okay, nothing amazing, but nothing cringe worthy for me. Honestly, I won't be continuing with the series because the characters were too over the top and unbelievable for me. And that's saying something when my first love is paranormal romance.

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### Book Him Danno says

An engaging murder mystery set in modern day Arizona with a newly transplanted news reporter as the heroine. As she delves into the unexpected disappearance of her predecessor she finds all is not as it appears

in the small town. This is a well written book and the vivid scenery descriptions will make you feel like you are there. I enjoyed this book and would read other offerings by this author.

I have rated this book 4 stars.

I obtained this book from Amazon in Kindle format.

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### **Dee Renee Chesnut says**

This book was my Nook Free Friday selection for Dec 31, 2010, and it is no longer free. This is the first book in the Kendall O'Dell series. This Free Friday selection introduced me to a new author and new series in the mystery genre which I enjoy.

The story moved fast and was plotted well so that it held my attention. Kendall is hired as an investigative reporter; but her editor wants to keep her investigations secret so that she does not arouse antagonism from the local sheriff who no longer considers the disappearance of a former reporter to be worth investigating. Kendall accepts the job for reasons that have more to do with her health. She is soon curious enough to investigate her own stories, and new information keeps coming back to the investigation by the former reporter. Supporting characters have stories of their own. There is enough romance that this book could fit into a romance genre too.

I recommend it to readers who enjoy cozy mysteries or to readers who like mystery with a romance. I enjoyed it enough to look for other books written by this author at my local library.

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### **Donald Blum says**

I'm a sucker for journalism mystery adventure so chalk this one up to a guilty pleasure adding an extra star to the rating it likely deserves. Although this is no "Girl With the Dragon Tattoo", it is not easily dismissible as "just another writer solving a mystery" story, either. Kendall O'Dell is a three-dimensional character with feelings, flaws, and emotions. Perhaps I found her a bit too romantic, but hey, I'm a guy so maybe her two love interests actually were realistic under the circumstances.

I certainly didn't see the whodunit answer except that I assumed it would be a lot more complicated than finding a single answer to the bevy of mysteries that sprouted up around this small Arizona town. I was correct, and the revelations made logical sense as it was revealed in the adventurous final chapters.

From reading reviews it appears the follow-up novels are more adventure-mysteries, but don't necessarily add to the O'Dell characterization, which was for me the best parts of Deadly Sanctuary. For that reason, I'm going to likely pass on the future adventures of Kendall O'Dell even though I'm glad I made her acquaintance this one time.

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### **Diane Ferbrache says**

Kendall O'Dell is a talented journalist looking for a quieter life when she takes a job at a small paper in a tiny

town in Arizona. But when her editor assigns her to investigate the disappearance of her predecessor and to find out if the town's sheriff is involved, she finds herself in deeper than either of them expected. Kendall is a strong-willed woman and her determination to find out what really happened creates a story that will keep the reader on the edge of his/her seat.

Although some of the story is pretty transparent and storylines are sometimes predictable, how the mystery plays out and just how Nobel ties everything together makes an interesting read. The author creates a town full of interesting characters that I cared about. I read this on an airplane on my Kindle and was really disappointed when I had to turn it off for landing. More like Jessica Fletcher's stories than Agatha Christie's, but this is a worthwhile effort and I will look for more of this author's books.

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## Paul says

In the "mystery/thriller" genre, I do not enjoy new writers easily. Far too often, I am disappointed, sometimes even irritated, by the clichés and the recycled plots. But Sylvia Nobel's first novel in the Kendall O'Dell Mysteries was better than I might have expected.

Usual positive/negative dichotomy:

Positives: The narrator's voice is brilliant, a reminder of other writers I enjoy such as Charlaine Harris (Southern Vampire Detective series, a.k.a. Sookie Stackhouse) and Lee Childs (Jack Reacher). Kendall O'Dell has a lot in common with the early Sookie Stackhouse (you know, before she gets as supernatural as the other characters). She is not super-human like Jack Reacher, and that makes her a more interesting character.

Negatives: Really, the romance thing was over-done. It was a predictable situation as soon as the two suitors, radically different, began to vie for her affections. It took what would have been a great "reveal" and sullied it by its predictability. On the same note, a slower burn with the "good guy" would likely have made it a better read, but I am a male reader and I am sure this was done for females.

In synopsis: our female lead moves to a rural Arizona town for her health and to take a seemingly dead-end job at a small town paper. A mystery about her predecessor drives the initial plot. Circumstances bring us into contact with a lot of "local color" (a major selling point for me), we meet the principal characters, our protagonist gets into and out of trouble, and the final "reveal" ties everything together very well.

As an additional bonus to me, I think Sylvia Nobel's dramatic conceit of the newspaper reporter speaks to people of a certain age who remember Woodward and Bernstein, Deep Throat, Edward Murrow, and the power of the press. Kendall O'Dell is not perfect, she makes mistakes. Some of her theories are dead wrong, and she pays for them.

If you do not mind the romance angle to the story or you can ignore it, this is a very worth-while read, a proverbial page turner.

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## Shelly♥ says

The only thing that saved this book from 2 stars was the last 60 pages where things got a little interesting. Another Free ebook via BNs Free Friday's program. I tell you, series are not my thing - especially female detectives.

Anyway, Kendell O'Dell is an asthmatic relocating to Arizona due to health problems. She finds a job in a small town at a newspaper via connections of her father. The editor sends her out on special assignment. Her predecessor mysteriously disappeared. Can she discover what really happened?

Two men vie for her affections. John Tally - co worker, rescuer, ranch owner and a general PITA guy and Eric - the gorgeous, suave lawyer. As she investigates many things come on her radar. A potentially crooked sheriff. An insane asylum. A woman's shelter. A Mexican woman looking for her predecessor. Dead teenagers in the desert. How do all the pieces fit together???

The climax of this book is quite exciting, although fairly predictable. Honestly, if you're a mystery buff (and I'm not), all the pieces are there for the most part. But figuring out how they all fit together is the more challenging thing. And really, the first 3/4 of the book were so boring. Enter Guy 1, "Please be my date." Guy 2, "Please be my date, I find you fascinating, even though I hardly know you." And, she's all a tingle...Blah, blah, blah. Is that too harsh?

I also found the main character to be more lucky than good. Not a very strong character. Now perhaps the author is setting the foundation for the character to grow, but honestly, I am ready to abandon her after one book. I don't care about what happens next.

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### **LeeAnn says**

The Kendall O'Dell character spoke to me on so many levels. First as a working woman in the newspaper biz. Next with her attraction to cowboys! And finally her curiosity. This is a book I could not put down and was anxious to read the next in the series.

Sylvia Nobel has a talent for weaving an exciting mystery that builds in so many directions you think you have it figured, but it could go another way... She doesn't disappoint with her skill as a storyteller.

I have joined the Kendall O'Dell Fan Club on Facebook and the Tally Fan Club as well. What a hunk! The movie is due out in Spring 2015 and I am anxious to see how they kept to the book in the movie story.

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### **Mags says**

Didn't really grab me. Some of the conclusions drawn were really bizarre given the information available to the reader. Of course, the conclusions the main character came to reasonably early on were the ones that came to fruition.

Glad it was free.

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### **Dorsi says**

I would really like to give this one 3 1/2 stars. I will give it 3 since it doesn't merit 4. It was a decent, although completely predictable, story. It kept my attention throughout the story and I enjoyed the

characters. The one thing about this book that really grated on my nerves was one of the characters, Ginger, kept saying "y'all." The annoying part about that is that she was always saying it to the main character...one person only. Y'all means you all or all of you. I could be wrong, but it seems that one person should not be addressed by y'all unless one has multiple personalities. But she would be talking to one person, Kendall, and say, "Y'all coming?" Arrrgh!

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### **Sidna says**

Eight years ago when I lived in Las Vegas I met the author at a book signing. At the time she had written three books, which I purchased and she signed for me. I put them on the shelf and forgot about them until recently when my husband picked this one up and read it. He liked it so much that he promptly read the other two and encouraged me to read it. I enjoyed the book, but was surprised that he enjoyed it so much because it is a typical female amateur detective/romance.

Kendall O'Dell, the heroine, is beginning her career as a reporter on the Philadelphia Inquirer when is forced to move to a drier climate because of her asthma. She has also recently been dumped by her fiancé so she moves with a broken heart. Kendall's dad, a retired foreign correspondent, has a friend he worked with during the Vietnam War who has recently purchased a newspaper in a small Arizona town called Castle Valley. He agrees to hire Kendall to replace an investigative reporter who has recently gone missing. After that the story line is fairly predictable.

As I was reading the book, I kept telling my husband what was going to happen next. He wanted me to read the book partly because we have considered retiring to Arizona, although neither of us has spent much time there. The picture the book painted of Arizona was not a favorable one as far as I am concerned.

This book was fine for what it is--a light mystery/romance read.

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### **Brandi says**

#### **Pretty good book**

I found myself reading this pretty fast. I'll definitely read the next one. I wish there was a little more character development for Dr Price but all in all, I enjoyed.

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### **Imanurse55 says**

It was a good book considering it was a free download for my Nook- As a mystery it kept my interest.

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