



Deadline

K.A. Tracy

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Murder in the desert is the beginning of the story for one reporter in this crackling series debut, perfect for fans of Michael Connelly.

When a young drifter is found murdered in the desert outside of Palm Springs, the police start their investigation?but it's crime reporter Sam Perry who gets to the bottom of the story.

Working her way backwards to piece together the victim's mysterious life, Sam gets drawn into the seedier side of the glamorous resort town, a world of strip clubs, blackmail, and betrayal. All suspicions point towards former A-list actress and now mayoral candidate Ellen Konrad, a woman that Sam can't quite figure out but is deeply intrigued by.

As their mutual attraction grows, the clues begin to add up and the list of people with secrets and a motive to kill multiplies. When she finally untangles the shocking story behind the drifter's death, the revelations put Sam and those closest to her in grave danger.

Deadline Details

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Author : K.A. Tracy

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From Reader Review Deadline for online ebook

Debbie says

I really, really liked this book. I loved the characters and the way that Sam and Joe connected. I just really want to hang with them. I really felt like I was in Palm Springs dealing with the heat as well.

There are SO many secrets going on in this book. It's amazing how the author is able to piece them all together. And how everyone becomes a suspect and the one you least suspect, of course, is the one who did it. And then you find out that people are not who they seem to be and that they are either someone else or are doing other jobs that what you thought. It's a highly perplexing puzzle that kept me intrigued from the very beginning until the very end. Even towards the end, when some of the pieces are being thrown out, I still didn't figure out where the heck they went and what was going on. Of course, the final answers do take several pages to tell, so I don't feel that bad not figuring it out. Plus, who wants to be able to figure everything out. I want to be surprised and have my jaw dropped.

Anyway, I would like to thank Diversion Books and Net Galley for allowing me to read and review this highly entertaining and enjoyable e-galley in exchange for an honest review. I highly recommend this book!

Frank Van Meer says

I think I've found my favorite investigational reporter.

Sam Perry quit her high profile job as criminal reporter for the LA Times because she couldn't stand all the death and drama anymore, and takes on a job for a small newspaper in Palm Springs, thinking she is content. Her highlight so far was an exposé on bingo fraud. But when she gets a call from her editor when a body is found in the desert, she just can't deny the thrill of a good investigation.

What sets this apart is that she doesn't want to find the killer, she wants to write a story about the victim and his life. What she uncovers affects many, many people and the trail includes everything from stripclubs to software piracy and a sad family history.

In the course of her investigation she meets former actress and now mayoral candidate Ellen Konrad when she arranges an ad hoc interview (Sam doesn't take no for an answer to pursue leads). She finds herself attracted to the beautiful woman and she's sort of dumbfounded by it.

The mystery is very complex (just maybe a bit too complex) but is neatly wrapped up in the end. One minor criticism could be that Sam seems to have endless resources who can find out just about anything about anyone. Another reviewer mentioned Sam could find evidence quicker than the police. The first piece of evidence Sam finds is a bit too convenient and throughout the story I got the feeling the police wasn't even trying.**edit** well, I've thought about it a couple of days later when it was 3am and once again I couldn't sleep.(view spoiler)

Sam is an amazing character, dogged when she sets her teeth into the story and witty as hell (with a healthy dose of sarcasm and maybe in denial about her sexuality). Her side-kick is the obligatory gay friend who is too funny for his own good.

There is a twist in the end no one saw coming, not Sam and not the reader. When that is revealed, some events previous in the story sounded a bit unbelievable, although it can be explained.

There was one thing that bothered me immensely, after all was revealed. I can't really say anything, because even the slightest hint would give everything away. I'll go re-read it again, just to make sure I didn't miss something vital.

An amazing debut and highly recommended.

Sunny says

I really enjoyed this book. The mystery was interesting (even though it got a little convoluted) and held my attention with lots of twists and turns, but the best part was the fantastic chemistry between Sam and Ellen. I enjoyed Sam's relationship with Joe too. I'm glad to see this is the first in a series because I look forward to more from these characters.

Lillian Cummings says

will leave full review once released

Susan says

This is the first in a new series, featuring investigative reporter Samantha Perry. Wanting to get away from the murder beat as crime reporter for the LA Times, Sam has moved to Palm Springs. Having written several books on high profile cases, money for the movie rights of her latest books has helped her become financially secure and she enjoys life at the quieter, "Weekender," newspaper, run by her old editor. So, when she is called about a body being found in the desert, at first she is unwilling to cover the case – however, old habits die hard and soon Sam finds her old skills being called into use.

Jeff Rydell was a drifter, who is found beaten and murdered. He had been volunteering for the campaign to elect actress Ellen Konrad elected as mayor and Sam is soon intrigued by both the case and Ellen herself. Along with her old friend, Joe Sapone, who comes for a visit, Sam begins to investigate why a man who seemed to be liked was found so brutally murdered. This fast paced novel takes us from past secrets, through possible links to drugs, politics and nightclubs.

As the first in a series, this sets the scene very well. I had a great sense of the place that Sam has made her home and liked the peripheral characters, which helped flesh out the storyline. At times, I felt that Sam's investigative powers were a little over played – there were at least two occasions where she found evidence before the police and that seemed unlikely. However, generally the characters and storyline were believable and well written. If you like mysteries with a strong female character, then you should find this an enjoyable read. Lastly, I received a copy of this book from the publisher, via NetGalley, for review.

Michelle (Michelle's Book Ends) Shealy says

I had the pleasure of reading a debut novel courtesy of Netgalley and Diversion Books. The write up mentioned that Michael Connelly fans would like this book. They weren't wrong!

Sam Perry, the local crime reporter, is onto a disturbing story. Jeff Rydell has been found murdered in the desert. Working with local detectives is ok but she prefers to conduct her own investigation. Her relentless pursuit of who committed this murder and the people involved lead her down a path that put her and the people she loves in danger.

Riveting story line but what was so engrossing was the way that Sam's character becomes so real as she learns who she is and the discovery of who others really are. Depth of character writing coupled with a killer storyline makes this a book you'll definitely want to give a chance. Everyone is not who they appear to be. The surprises come where you least expect them.

Can Sam solve Jeff's murder? Who will be hurt when a local mayoral candidate seems to be involved? Is Sam trusting the right people? The kind of story that you'll get the answers to but the end will leave you wanting to know what is next for Sam and the people she cares about.

lisa says

Deadline is a crime noir novel in a new series by K.A Tracy with gutsy reporter Sam Perry who is more like a cop than the cops.

A body is found in the desert. The murder victim is identified as Jeff Rydell a Tennessean who is out west in Palm Springs volunteering as a campaigner on the local election. Carrying out her own investigation into his death is Sam Perry, once crime beat reporter for the LA Times, now a reporter for the Palm Springs Weekender.

With dogged characteristics resembling a cop, Sam quickly uncovers clues of Rydell's life past and present. She is on the trail of discovering what he was up to in Palm Springs and what got him killed. Her investigation leads her to former actress, now mayoral candidate Ellen Konrad. A mutual attraction develops between Sam and Ellen. This aspect of the book, and the scenes between them I found distracting.

The clues are mounting, along with the cast of characters, all of whom seem to be keeping secrets. As Sam gets closer to the truth, she is getting nearer to the danger.

K.A. Tracy invites you into the town of Palm Springs and you get a real sense of it's terrain and it's people. This is a well written crime novel which will keep you guessing. It kept me interested until the end. However I found the story line to be a little muddled and the numerous imperceptible characters confusing at times. This did not thwart my enjoyment of reading this book and I would recommend.

3.5 Stars

- Received book from publisher Diversion Books for honest review thank you.

Kennedy says

There was much to enjoy about this read. Samantha Perry what is there not to like. A woman of integrity, determination and a fierceness about her that only comes out when provoked. Ellen Konrad multidimensional smooth operator with LOTS of hidden baggage. Samantha's friend Joe is an interesting character because of what he provides for Samantha. The story is interesting, engaging and complex. There are many characters, several sub-plots and a few name changes that had this reader slowing down, backtracking and head shaking. Let me state that none of this hindered my captivation with the read.

CL says

Sam Perry's editor offers her a chance to write the crime story of a victim found in the desert. She had asked her editor to only give her stories on live victims as she has had enough of death but this story pulls her in and before you know it she is hooked and wants to write the story. Clues lead back to an Ellen Konrad and all is not as it seems with Ellen and her family but Sam cannot put her finger on it and as she gets closer to the truth she admits to herself she is attracted to Ellen Konrad. As she follows the clues she finds herself in a strip club and then hobnobbing with the rich and famous but she knows if she follows her instincts she will unravel this murder and have a great story to print for her paper if she doesn't get herself hurt first. Great page turner.

Jem says

Ten years as a top crime reporter in L.A. has left Sam Tracy sick of the violence and death. A lucrative movie-rights deal on a book she wrote allows her to move to Palm Springs in semi-retirement where she now works for a dinky advertising and coupon-laden weekly that only puts out a paper on weekends.

But six months on with nothing more exciting to 'investigate' than rigged bingo games and flea infestations, Sam finds herself longing for that old, familiar adrenaline rush that only a 'real' crime can bring. When a murder turns up in the otherwise laid-back resort town, it doesn't take long for Sam to decide to jump back in the fray.

What follows is a taut and gripping investigation of a murder that keeps on turning up more questions than answers the deeper Sam digs into it. As the suspect list grows, so does the seeming complexity of the case. Sam knows the best explanation is often the simplest. But the simplest just doesn't work in this case.

The thing I admired most about this book was how it doesn't waste the reader's time. A third of the way in and I was thinking, if only all authors were this efficient, I could probably read a whole lot more books. :) I haven't felt this way about a book in a long time honestly. The relatively recent development of associating word count with ebook value and pricing and the absence of any effort at editing (or too lax editing, sadly even in top publishing houses) has unfortunately resulted in books that make readers sit through too much filler just to get to the good parts. And what is supposed to be a relaxing, pleasurable exercise has become something of a chore. We readers are a patient and forgiving lot. Well, I am, lol. And yeah, we're not exactly spoiled for choice in this genre. So when a gem like this book comes along, it's such a pleasant surprise. The other thing that I loved about the book was how the author never needed to 'tell' us about her characters. We know Sam is smart, dogged, devious and reckless because we see her being so.

It's always best to get into these kinds of books knowing as little as possible, so if you like lesbian mysteries with a romantic subplot, read no further. Suffice it to say that the writing is excellent. The lead characters have great chemistry and enjoy some sparkling repartee. The case is deliciously (and sometimes

frustratingly) complex and well-constructed. And just when you think you've finally figured it out, the author springs another twist on the unsuspecting reader.

In between Sam's urgent but methodical quest for answers (reporter's got deadlines!), the book also deals with some familiar issues: questioning one's sexuality, coming-out-late-in-life, mental and drug issues, and past trauma. The last one in particular may be uncomfortable or even disturbing for sensitive readers.

Even though the romance is not the main theme of the book, it was a far more interesting read for me than some full-on romance books. The scenes featuring the leads together are easily my favorite parts of the book. Another noteworthy aspect is how the book dealt with Sam's sexuality. Despite the investigative focus of the book, this issue was actually very well fleshed out and realistically treated.

Things do get dizzyingly confusing towards the end, though not the main murder mystery itself, but one of the other ones (there are at least three mysteries that needed unraveling!). I wonder how much coffee was expended to tie everything together and wrap it all up. :)

4.5 stars

Edit: I do have some issues with the big reveal. I'm very tempted to reduce the rating because of it. But it's a plot issue so I'm gonna think on it some more. Major spoilers ahead. (view spoiler)

Stephanie says

Wonderful debut! A strong main character, good supporting cast and mystery that actually makes sense and has substance. I only gave it 4 stars as I felt the mystery...as well as the mystery within the mystery...were a little too complex and at times difficult to follow. I found myself going back and rereading in some areas. But, overall a solid read. I will look for more from this author!

Jakalak says

As an avid reader of lesbian mystery novels, I have read a lot of garbage. If there is a whodunit and two women who maybe might possibly eventually kiss, I will keep reading no matter how painful it gets. Fortunately, *Deadline* is emphatically **not** one of those novels. The characters are three-dimensional, the dialogue is snappy without sounding contrived (so difficult to do!), and the mystery -- while complicated -- is satisfactorily resolved at the end.

Deadline is of the same caliber as your mainstream big-name bestselling mystery authors but with a minor gay twist. This is clearly not niche fiction intended solely for an audience of gay women who resign themselves to whatever Sapphic fictional representations they can scrounge up. In this same vein, I really enjoyed the way the "coming out" process is handled because it is realistic for the setting of the story and the life stage of the character. I'm curious to know more about Sam's past and future, and I can't wait for the next installment in the series!

Agircandream says

Fun read. Sam might be an investigative journalist but this book reads like an intelligent and entertaining police procedural. Her sources are first rate and so are Sam's instincts. Joe was a nice voice of reason whenever he was on page and the simmering relationship between Sam and Ellen can only get better with future books.

I admit to losing the plot and falling behind in my investigative note-taking. The mystery and all the names changes and connections boggled my work-busy brain. I'm sure a re-read would clear up a lot of the mystery but I cannot blame the author for my lack of attention.

Fun read and I am looking forward to more Sam Perry mysteries. I promise to take better notes next time.

Heather Martin says

Deadline

I listened to the first 75% and read the rest of it. I would recommend reading the book instead of listening to the audio. There was a lot of characters and information with the investigation and it was really hard to get that with the narration. The narrator isn't terrible but there isn't distinction between voices and it makes it hard to follow along with the story. Im undecided if I'll read more of this series. I may try reading the next one before making a final decision.

Paul Allard says

Murder story in Palm Springs

A female investigative journalist in Palm Springs look into the murder of a volunteer campaigner in a local election. The novel contains a bit of everything: sexual abuse, drug dealing, murder, flooding, homosexuality. It is an engaging and entertaining read which I would recommend to all lovers of strong female detectives (VI Warshawski, Kinsey Milhone etc..).

One thing that I find annoying about these type of books – and this is not uncommon – is the occasional street directions about routes that the main character takes. This is meaningless to anybody who doesn't live in the area and, in my opinion, adds nothing to the story.

However I thoroughly enjoyed this and I hope that you will too
