



Skeleton Key

Anthony Horowitz

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Teenage superspy Alex Rider is enlisted by the national security services again – this time for a routine reconnaissance mission at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships.

But before long, Alex finds himself caught up in a terrifying chain of events that leads from the Chinese Triad gangs in London to an undercover assignment in Cuba. Alex begins to make chilling links between suspicious deaths, an illegal nuclear weapons deal and the plans of his host, Russian General Sarov, for the future of the world...

Skeleton Key Details

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Author : Anthony Horowitz

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From Reader Review Skeleton Key for online ebook

Kathleen says

Kids, especially boys, are going to love this series. It's a spy novel with a 14 year old boy as the hero (and I mean hero in all aspects *eye roll*) who saved the day world from a crazy military man who wanted to clean up the world with his nuclear bombs. Yes, a 14 year old boy saved the world.

I appreciate the fun it presents but it didn't reel me in. It's a classic 'it's not you, it's me' dilemma. I own the whole series so I know I'll read the next books eventually. However, I'm not compelled to pick up the next book right away. I have other more fun- truly more fun- books to read ;) If you've got kids fixated with playing crime busters, they would adore this series to bits!

Ryan Buckby says

Another book in the series, this book continues the journey of Alex Rider a 14 year old boy who is a spy for MI6 and is about to embark on is third mission.

After reading this book i feel like this one lacked something the other two had and i feel like it was a let down for me and i hope the next book picks up the series again for me. Alex is this time taken to Cuba with to CIA agents to investigate General Sarov an evil man who is trying to get his evil plan that will change the world for the worst.

Plot: Alex is trying to leave the spy world and MI6 so he can lead a normal life as a 14 year old teenager but things don't work out the way he had hoped when he is swept up again by MI6 and the CIA whisked into another mission. The plot in this book was lacking something and i think it was the lack of action that the other two books had and i feel like Alex just wasn't feeling this mission and i could clearly tell. I did enjoy some of the book but a lot of it i didn't enjoy and most of it was when Alex was with General Sarvo because i feel like Alex just let him do whatever and he didn't really fight back like Alex would.

Anthony's writing is really good he can really throw you into the story and you really do feel like that you are with Alex in every sense. His characters are all well thought out and well fleshed out which i really enjoy with every book in this series i read.

Even though this book lacked in that special Alex Rider book with the plot not at the strongest, i hope it does manage to pick itself up in book four.

Melanie says

I love the Alex Rider series, and upon reading this book, I was thrilled. It was always action-packed, and this book started to take a slightly darker mood, with more emotions and such. One of the things I love about the series is how REAL it is. In a fantasy book, because it is fantasy, writing realistically is always a big part. In other books with spy kids, they're always thrilled to be a spy and "putting themselves in danger". But Alex

Rider is different. In the first two books, I always thought that if I were Alex I'd love doing all the spy work, but in this book, I connected to him more, and with all the blackmail, I actually started understanding the way he feels- he just wants a normal childhood, with friends and avoiding homework and girls.

The main plot was less impressive this time, although it did have some twists, you figure out the villains' plans way before. I did like that the General has an actual personality and depth, as a character. Horowitz' previous villains didn't really have much of that.

Sabina...well...I'm really not sure what I think of her, to be honest. I like what she represents, and the idea that she's giving Alex a normal life, but as a character, I was disappointed. She's so...stereotypical. Or, just not very interesting. If there's going to be a love interest in these types of action books, I always like it better if the said girl is interesting- perhaps very dangerous, or incredibly smart, or beautiful, or just has a personality that is unique; who is stubborn and hot-headed and teases incessantly.

Overall, though, I loved the book. It took the series to a new level, in terms of emotional development, and I loved the plot and action it provided.

Nikki says

3.5 For me, I think this one is the weakest in the series, if not simply the least memorable. I don't mind the formulaic plots, or the cliche spy movie stuff ('Before I kill you, I shall tell you my whole plan' etc) because that's the nature of this genre. It's 007 at age 14. But this book is altogether way too similar to the first book. The idealistic bad guy, the scarred sidekick, the plane ride of doom, the whole thing, really.

We do of course meet Sabina, who is fun. And we get to see Alex dealing with the fact that he has never had a real family. That's really the saving grace of this book; we start to see the effects this life is having on Alex, and that MI6 doesn't particularly care.

Carlos says

Alex is doing a personal favor for Mr. Crawley when he sets off a chain of events that puts him in Skeleton Key, near Cuba, working for the CIA. The Third book in the Alex Rider series. The best Alex Rider book I Have read so far. I could not believe the ending i was actually confused. Liked it a lot . Alex Rider Adventure Skeleton Key Hardcover Anthony Horowitz

Ashley says

Rating: 3/5

Minor spoilers

I was pretty disappointed with this one. I really enjoyed Point Blank, but this book pretty much paled in comparison to it. Don't get me wrong, it was enjoyable enough, but it wasn't everything I was hoping for.

This book begins shortly after Alex recovered from France and has started to go to school again. Alex gets sucked back into his work at M16 when he is asked to become a ballboy at Wimbledon so he can keep a look out for anything suspicious. After some unfortunate events where a "gang" of sorts is after Alex, M16 tells him he must leave the country for a period of time, so Alex accepts a job with the CIA in Skeleton Key, an

island near Cuba.

It took a very long time for me to get into this book. The first half was just extremely boring and virtually nothing happened. It took maybe 100 pages or more just for us to even learn about the job in Skeleton Key, or Cayo Esqueleto. It also took a very long time for any action to happen. In Point Blank, we're given a sort of sneak peek as to why the case was brought to the attention of M16. The same happens in Skeleton Key, however we're given way too many answers in the first chapter. We learn about the plan right at the beginning, so the "reveal" meant pretty much nothing, unlike in Point Blank where we learn what's going on at the same time as Alex.

On top of this, the writing also felt pretty bland. You could argue that the book is for middle grade in addition to young adult, but this doesn't mean the writing has to be "dumbed down." This didn't bother me for all of the book, but it was pretty noticeable in some places.

Overall, this was still a good book but in my opinion it was the worst in the series so far. It took far too long for the story to actually start, and too much was given away in the beginning. I enjoyed how the first two books had some sort of air of mystery to them that this one lacked. This isn't one of the best series I've read but it was definitely pretty good, so if you're thinking about trying it, I'd definitely recommend picking up Stormbreaker (the first in the series). This one wasn't too great, but I'll probably pick up Eagle Strike at some point.

Jack says

I decided to read "Skeleton Key" by Anthony Horowitz because lots of my friends had read it and had said it was a great book. I had read the first book in the series before and I thought it was really good. The cover of the book isn't very exciting but the content inside the book definitely is.

My favorite character in the book is Conrad. He is a really strange man with an eye to kill. Years before the book was set, Conrad was trying to sneak a bomb into a highly populated area when the bomb blew up on his body. He was blown into pieces and almost died. Specialist doctors managed to piece him back together. He is a messed up person with features well out of proportion.

My favorite quote in this book is, "you're never too young to die...". This quote is very interesting because it leaves uncertainty to what will happen to Alex Rider (the main character). This could mean that he is going to die or it could mean he will be close to it.

After reading this book I wondered if there really were secret agents in the world. It seems unlikely but it would be interesting if there was. In the book the main evil character tries to set off a nuclear bomb but doesn't succeed. This has made me think about all the horrible people in the world who want to terrorize countries or the whole world. This book was really great and I will definitely read more of the series by Anthony Horowitz.

Aaron Vincent says

This is my seventh Anthony Horowitz book and I noticed a couple of bold moves in the sudden change in his

patterns. Some are good, some are craps.

In the first two books of Alex Rider and in all the Gatekeepers books, his main villain always have some kind of physical deformities, creepy appearance and sometimes, even monstrous. I like these books but the villain pattern is getting tiring. Good thing that in Skeleton Key, he introduced us the General Alexeis Sarov, a sixty something years old Russian general but looked "twenty years younger", tall, well built and "radiates power and control". And in contrary to all the past villains who were shown to be motivated only by greed for power or vengeance, Horowitz gave Sarov an emotional depth. Yes, he has devious plans that will "end the world" but his longing will make it hard for you to completely hate him. At the end, his death(oh common, it's not a spoiler. We know that all Alex Rider's enemies gets killed at the end.) will not entirely give you satisfaction but you will also sympathize with his character.

By giving his villain a new dimension, we get to see more of Alex Rider. In this book, we don't only get to see Alex's master skills on being a spy but also it reminded us that he is still just a boy, longing for parents that he never had. This is a major development in Alex's character.

Plot-wise, Point Blank is better. The mystery of what the villain's scheme is harder to decipher in Point Blank. While in Skeleton Key, even if its not stated, we already can guess what is Sarov's plan. But if you will look at the development of the whole storyarc of the series, this book was better. Point Blank is still my favorite but Skeleton Key is this |--| close to it.

On the downside, Horowitz also introduced us a new character, Sabina Pleasure, who possibly will appear more in the future books. There's a huge possibility that Alex will fall in love with her. I don't know what got into Horowitz' head for doing this but come on, this is a spy book!! And in spy fiction, the only room for a female character is a sexual partner or a badass chick sidekick. You cannot have a romantic angle! And what's up with the name? Pleasure? Come on! His market are supposed to be boys, don't try widening it just for the sake of the increase of sales. If a girl doesn't have interest in spy books, she will never have any interest in it even if you introduce a romantic angle to it. If the succeeding books will continue to be sappy and romantic, I'm out! Too bad, I already got until book five.

Hayat says

To review...

Lila Kims says

Alex. Is. Awesome. I've probably said it before, but I'll say it again. And probably again. And probably again. (What can I say? He's great!) I am sooooo going to keep reading this series. Absolutely. Definitely. Undoubtedly.

I especially loved the villain in this book. Er, I mean, I *hated* him. But I loved how he was done. Although I did hate him, I also pitied him. His evident pain - his deep emotions - added a wonderful layer of realism to him.

On another note, the "vacation" setting really fits with this time of year. So that was nice. :D

I just really, really enjoyed this. O_O

Jimmy R. says

Skeleton Key was a phenomenal book, and I couldn't put it down. I loved everything about it; the action, the suspense and the twists to the plot. The only thing is that I read the series out of order. There was one main action part in the middle, and my favorite is at the end. One of the parts is in the middle, and it is when Alex, Carver, and Troy went Scuba diving for a possible underwater entrance to Sarov's mansion. Carver and Troy (two Adults who work for the CIA) go down first. After a while, they don't come back, so Alex goes down to look for them. He later finds out that they were caught in a "cave" that, when it senses motion, it closes its stalactites and stalagmites, killing anything that goes in. While Alex is exploring, he runs into a great white shark. Alex only lives because he is a good swimmer, and can virtually dodge anything, including the shark. He accidentally leads it into the cave, and he witnesses what happened to Troy and Carver. The action filled part in the end, is when Alex is on a plane, seconds away from leaving for Russia. The only reason he is going to Russia is because Sarov wants to make Alex his child. Sarov lost his son to war, and wants another one. Alex has gear from Smitty (the gadgets person for MI6), and one of those things is a stun grenade disguised as a Tiger Woods bobble-head. Alex pretends to be stretching his legs, and getting ready for a long flight to Russia. He is really pulling the chord on the stun grenade, drops it, and ran out the door second before it went off. He soon returns to the CIA, explains everything, and is sent home to England.

Sam says

The main characters in this book are Alex Rider; a 14 year old English school boy who was drafted by MI6 (British special forces) after his uncle was killed in action. Alex is also accompanied by his housekeeper and more or less guardian, Jack Starbright. There is also an evil villain in this book and his name is General Alexi Sarov. This guy was big in the Soviet Union and when they went down he lost everything including his only son. This is what caused him to hold Alex captive for much of the book; he thought that he could have Alex to replace his dead son. Of course Sarov also has a henchman named Conrad who is a very lucky man (although that is somewhat arguable); Conrad somehow survived when a bomb that he was carrying suddenly exploded he has over 30 pins in his body a plate in his skull and metal wires in all of his big joints and his jaw. The main plotline of this book is that Sarov has a nuclear sub fleet he's going to plant a bomb on them that would blow them up pretty much killing like half of the world's population. Afterwards the Russians will be looked down upon and they'll go to the president. Then Sarov will release a film of the president drunk and an edited interview of the president. Later the president will be found dead and Sarov will take his place. All of this will happen unless Alex can stop him.

I really liked this book because it had a lot of action, but unlike the other books it has more cliffhangers than usual and I really liked that because it made the book into a quick fun page turner. The one thing I didn't like about this book was how in the mid-section it really didn't have any action and it wasn't really that interesting, but all in all I really enjoyed the rest of the book.

If I had to recommend this to someone it would probably be for boys in sixth grade and up because of some of the violence. I would also recommend this to my friends and to anybody who likes quick paced semi-violent action books.

Chance says

I'm sorry, but this book was absolutely horrible.

Lola says

3.5 stars.

Gosh, this series is so addictive!

Even if it's completely unrealistic.

Even if Alex Rider should have died 50 times over at this point.

Alex grows on you. I pity his situation of being an orphan but I admire the amount of strength he shows every day and especially during missions to save the world. Go Alex!

Bebe says

In Skeleton Key, Alex Rider is teamed up with the CIA on a mission to the island of Skeleton Key, the home of a Russian general that has lost his life and son. The Russian general also has a nuclear weapon....

Tahera says

Rating: 3.5*

The Alex Rider series is a fun read although it is a bit far fetched at times (especially the parts where Alex a 14 year old boy manages to escape near death situations while his adult counterparts mostly fall victim to them)! Overall a fun read and quite action packed!

Andrew says

Alex Rider has been through a lot in his life. He has been almost electrocuted by a giant jellyfish, been held prisoner twice, and has stood face to face with evil. But none of his previous experiences will even come close to this one. One day after soccer practice, Crawley, a man who works for MI6, appears, asking Alex to be a ball boy and keep an eye on the Wimbledon tennis tournament and watch for anything suspicious, since there had been a break in. Immediately, he spots a guard who is up to something suspicious. After foiling the man's plan to sabotage the tournament, Alex thinks that he will be able to sit back and relax on his vacation with one of the ball girls from the tournament, Sabina. While on this vacation, though, he is

attacked by another man from the same gang that the mysterious guard was from. The two heads of MI6 propose to have him work for the CIA briefly on a mission while they try to let the gang that attacked him know that he is under their wing. With rumors of nuclear bombs, a Russian president making a visit to an old Russian general, Alex plunges headfirst into a mystery that is not what it seems.

Michael says

The book "Skeleton Key" is a thrilling exciting novel. From the moment you open the book from the time you close it there is action all around. I ended up reading at separate time, taking a long break in between reading this and I regret it because the ending could have come any faster. Overall I was more than happy about the book and enjoyed every page I turned. I would recommend this book to anyone but mainly guys.

Alex Rider is a 14 year old boy with fair hair and brown eyes, his parents were killed in a "accident" and ever since was raised by his uncle. Alan Blunt is an emotionless man and is the head of the M16. Wolf is a military squad leader who trained with Alex at M16. Chinese gang member was trying to poison players at Wimbledon for reasons you will have to find out!

The book begins with the trade of nuclear weapons but the people selling the arms are killed by alligators in a unexpected way. Soon after Alex hears from the M16 that he must go on a new mission but it was almost a dream mission. He was able to be a ball boy at Wimbledon. He is assigned this position because earlier that week a man broke in and broke out, but they couldn't find out who it was or what he stole. So Alex became a ball boy. Meanwhile many of the top ranked players weren't performing and lost the tournament and a underdog won the tournament. During the whole time Alex is suspicious about a security guard who made unnecessary phone calls. Soon Alex finds himself in an intense situation where he finds out that the players are being drugged and the guard tries to kill him! Alex escapes and figures out the reason behind why the man was drugging the players. But there is more to the story read it and you will never regret it.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Point Blanc = Point Blank (Alex Rider, #2), Anthony Horowitz

Point Blanc is the second book in the Alex Rider series, written by British author Anthony Horowitz. The book was released in the United Kingdom on September 3, 2001 and in North America on April 15, 2002, under the alternate title: Point Blank. The book opens with the death of American electronics billionaire Michael J. Roscoe in an elevator shaft in his New York City offices, arranged by a reputable contract killer known only as The Gentleman. In London, Alex Rider ends up in trouble with the police for causing a large amount of damage to a new conference centre by exposing a school drug dealer operating out of a barge in Putney River. ...

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kennedy says

great book i am reading it right now it has a very interesting story line but it is kind of ridiculous that the spy is fourteen.
