



The Wedding Guest

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The electrifying new Alex Delaware thriller from global bestseller Jonathan Kellerman. First comes love...then comes murder.

In the middle of a 'Saints and Sinners' themed wedding, a bridesmaid finds a young woman's corpse collapsed in the bathroom. None of the wedding guests claim to know the well-dressed victim but psychologist Alex Delaware and Detective Milo Sturgis aren't so convinced.

The Wedding Guest Details

Date : Expected publication: February 7th 2019 by Century (first published February 5th 2019)

ISBN : 9781780899022

Author : Jonathan Kellerman

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction

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Shalini says

This book gave me a serious case of nostalgia... I started reading Jonathan Kellerman from the very beginning, and this is his 34th book. So I have been reading his stories with Alex Delaware and Milo Sturgis all through my life.

The Characters

Alex Delaware was a child psychologist, and Milo Sturgis a gay detective in the 1980s where he had to face opposition and hate from all his colleagues. The author had courage to write stories with darker themes right from the very beginning, and a gay police detective was practically unknown in those times. Hence his books fascinated me.

And this book too had a murder mystery in the upstairs loo of a wedding reception, a converted bar. A woman in red was found garrotted along with a cocktail of opioids injected into the base of the brain. And Milo and Alex get to what they do best... Pure investigation.

This could be read as a standalone and it was just as interesting. Jonathan Kellerman stuck to his trademark theme - the dark human psyche. Alex Delaware provided the psychological insight to Milo's investigative deductions.

The thing that niggled me was that the book appeared a bit disjointed in the grand reveal as it didn't go with the flow. I missed the pizzazz of the prose which used to be goose-bumpy.

Overall, a good book for hard-core Jonathan Kellerman fans!!

Jeanne says

Reading Kellerman is like seeing an old friend after being away for awhile. We pick up where we left off in the reader's relationship with Alex, Milo, Robin and others (even the Koi are doing well). Interesting as always, never guessing the correct ending and enjoying the journey. Although I don't care for most author's scenic descriptive writing, Kellerman has such a deft hand you know the atmosphere/location with a minimum of words with maximum impact. As a visual reader everything from characters to situations come alive

Lisa says

My thanks to Random House and Netgalley.

It's been 10 years since I've read one of these books, and I'll admit that it's almost like a soap opera. Not too much has changed. I love Alex and Milo. As always, it's a good story. I tend to get wrapped up in these books, then towards the finish realize that it's just the same old, same old. Nothing wrong with that, but I do sort of wish that Mr. Kellerman, after all these years would have started a new series. Oh well! This is a book

and series that I'd recommend, but I believe I'm finally done.

Monnie says

Ah, what could be better than another get-together of two of my favorite characters - police consultant and psychologist Dr. Alex Delaware and his curmudgeonly but lovable cohort Milo Sturgis? In this one, their back-and-forths seemed more frequent and provided greater insights into their characters (and their relationship) than usual - for me, much appreciated. Besides that, Alex's long-time love and guitar-maker Robin landed a more featured role - still another plus.

As the title suggests, this one begins with a wedding guest who didn't appear on the invitation list - not even as a plus one - and who for sure didn't get a great reception. In fact, she turns up dead; murdered with a combination of injected knockout drug and wire garrote reminiscent of a guitar string. No one can come up with an identity, and Milo calls Alex for help with the case. Fairly early on, it is learned that the somewhat unconventional venue used to be a seedy bar known for its equally seedy pole dancers, thus expanding the search beyond the rich and not-so-rich who enjoyed wedding guest-list status.

Despite their denials of anything connected to the victim, the families of the bride and groom - and the bride and groom themselves - remain on the suspect list (some very near the top). That in turn leads Alex and Milo down a number of aisles, most of which don't lead to blissful solutions. Finally, a previous case comes to light that rings bells in harmony, lifting the veil under which the real killer has been hiding.

And that brings me to the part that bothered me just a tiny bit. I can't be specific without spoiling things, but the ending seemed somehow disjointed - as if the usual suspects just weren't cutting it and a new ending was needed to deliver a more effective punch. That said, I enjoyed the book as a whole as always - Alex is in absolutely zero danger of dropping off my Top 10 list of all-time favorite book heroes. Given that this is the 34th in the series (all of which I've read), that's gotta be some kind of record. My undying gratitude goes to the publisher, via NetGalley, for the opportunity to read and review an advance copy.

Dave says

Perhaps beginning a series on the Thirty-fourth book is not always the recommended place to start, but that's what I did. Absent background and character history, one can certainly dig in.

Kellerman offers us a murder mystery in modern day Los Angeles filled with vacuous empty-headed wanna-be stars and strippers and Calabasas doctors who can't be bothered. It's a city filled with traffic, plastic people, bubble headed fools, and the like.

And into this city we get a wedding at a former strip club and a body turns up spoiling that special day. Who is the corpse? That question haunts our investigators for much of the book.

Ultimately, the book was an easy read, but not for me stylistically.

Joan says

I have never read any of Jonathan Kellerman's previous novels but I really liked the blurb and, as it is the 34th book in the Alex Delaware series, I thought I was on to a winner. I surely didn't have any problems getting into the novel and it read well as a standalone book.

The setting of the crime is at the Saints and Sinners themed wedding party of an unfortunate young just-married couple. One of the bridesmaids stumbles upon a dead body in an upstairs toilet. The victim appears to be unknown to both the families of the bride and the groom and the once joyous wedding is thrown into chaos. The bride is distraught and is convinced it is a hate crime against her. Who is the young lady? Why is she at the wedding? Who put the wire around her throat? It's the responsibility of top psychologist Alex Delaware and LAPD Lieutenant Milo Sturgis to pool their experience and knowledge to discover the identity of both murder victim and murderer. It's not going to be easy and a trail of red herrings and blind alleyways stand between the two friends and the unveiling of the truth.

I found the story both disappointing and very slow moving. I almost gave up reading the novel, but I kept expecting the pace to improve and so I kept turning the pages. One thing I can almost guarantee is that the identity of the perpetrator will elude your own predictions. I received a complimentary copy of this novel from Cornerstone Publishing through my membership of NetGalley. These are my own honest and well considered opinions. Unfortunately this book is not to my taste. 2*

Jacqui says

If you love psychologist Dr. Alex Delaware's escapades into crime solving, Jonathan Kellerman's latest in the series, *The Wedding Guest* (Ballantine Books 2019) is in your sweet spot. Alex is called in by LAPD long-time friend, Detective Milo Sturgis, to help when a beautiful girl winds up dead at a wedding. No one knows her, nor did they invite her, though she's dressed to kill (pun intended) for the wedding party called Saints and Sinner. Alex does what he usually does--logically pull threads--which inevitably reveals the secrets he hopes will unravel the murder. Adding its own interest to the story is Alex's enigmatic girlfriend with the unusual job of repairing expensive stringed instrument and his ever-beloved dog Blanche who keeps everyone centered. Spicing up the story are some of my favorite millennial words--bespoke, woke, and pop-up kitchen (yeah, that's not a typo).

I've been an avid reader of this series for a decade. There have been a few missteps though I won't name names but with this one, Kellerman is back doing what he does best, focusing on the characteristics that make Alex Delaware a great leading man. He's clever, smart, witty, and filled with those psychologic insights into the comments and actions of those involved and lead to answers.

"Her eyes made another sweep to the left. The fingers on her outthrust hip drummed. She saw me looking. Smiled and nodded, as if we were sharing a secret. I raised my eyebrows. She did the same. Shall we dance?"
xx

"Tall woman in her forties wearing a clingy black rayon robe over something beige and lacy. Red nose, bloodshot eyes, white-blond hair bunched up atop her head."

xx

"Calabasas, spilling into the Santa Monica Mountains on the western edge of the San Fernando Valley, used to be a low-key pocket of rustic, horsey serenity. That's been altered by an influx of retired athletes and celebrities who've achieved fame for merely existing, along with the metastatic palaces they erect and

businesses that cater to self-love and shallow notoriety."

With a less talented writing pen, this could be dreary but Kellerman makes it fascinating.

And since I'm currently exhausted by geopolitics, this was a wonderful change into good old fashioned reliable police work.

D.M. says

I don't often read murder mystery but I really liked the title and the synopsis intrigued me. The wedding guest is a mystery. Nobody seems to know her.

Our victim is found by one of the bridesmaids looking for the little girl's room.

The victim is a young Female, who is unknown to the wedding party. Her cause of death is strangulation. The murder weapon was a thin wire of sorts. But who would want murder on a white wedding day? Everyone is a suspect. Someone must know something.

The detectives have to work the case with very little to go on. This is the first book I've read in the Alex Delaware series. It can easily be read as a stand-alone. Unfortunately, the story wasn't for me. I found the pace a little slow.

2 stars out of 5. Sorry. *I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review. I truly hope this book finds the audience it needs. It just isn't me.

Amy-GallivantingPages says

***3 Stars ***

Expected Publication: Feb 5, 2019

This is book #34 in the Alex Delaware series... and the first book I've read in the series. Probably not the smartest idea, however I don't think it hindered me much and read easily as a stand alone. I can say I wasn't really interested in Alex, a child psychologist who works part time as a consultant for the police, but his story wasn't a big focus of this read.

The main story is a girl is found dead in the bathroom of a wedding by one of the bridesmaids. Upon questioning, no one seems to know who this girl is and/or why she was at the wedding.

This storyline was quite complex so it made it difficult to figure out who the killer was which kept my interest. Overall it was a solid story and I would read more in this series.

Special thanks to NetGalley and Random House Publishing for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Diana says

RTC closer to release date of February 7.

Kaceey - Traveling Sister says

It's your wedding day and everyone is dressed to impress! The sky's the limit. Even going so far as renting a swanky old burlesque bar for the high-end reception. Dress code for the evening? **Dress hot!**

It's all booze and big laughs until a girl is found dead in a hidden-away staff bathroom. One thing's for certain...she certainly had the dress requirements. Hot little red dress complimented by spiked six inch heels. But who is *she*? No one claims to know her. Not the brides' side nor the grooms. Who was this wedding crasher? And more bothersome...how did she end up dead?

Well here I go again down memory lane revisiting what could be my longest running series! This book is #34 in the series! Can you believe it? But not to worry or turn your back on it. You can easily pick this one up and read it on its own.

The main characters remain as steady as ever.

Alex Delaware is a child psychologist who also moonlights as a consultant to the Los Angeles police department. His long-time girlfriend Robin and their French bulldog Blanche also make their appearances.

And of course, we can't forget about Detective Milo Sturgis. Yup...still making waves wherever he goes. But I'm getting the feeling he's growing on those around him...maybe?

If you are a fan of the series don't miss out!

Thank you to NetGalley, Random House Publishing - Ballantine and Jonathan Kellerman for an ARC to read and review.

Donna Hines says

The Party's Over!

Sadly the last thing a bride and groom would hope to find on their wedding is turmoil but death?! WTH! Who is the young lady uncovered by the bridesmaid on the way to the bathroom and why was she found strangled?

My word if you didn't invite her who did?

Well beyond this mess there's a dynamic duo with Dr. Alex and Milo Sturgis that is remarkable so if they can't solve this crime nobody can.

However, the unconventional venue had a shady past with a few pole dancers and clientele so we might want to start the search there.

Needless to say it went downhill for me from that point with a mediocre middle and nothing left by the end. Perhaps you'll enjoy this one better than I so take the chance and enjoy.

A few saints but plenty more sinners here.

Thank you to Jonathan, the publisher, NetGalley, and Aldiko for this ARC in exchange for this honest review.

Sue says

Review to come,

A copy of this book was provided by the publisher through NetGalley in return for an honest review.

Donna Davis says

The wedding guest is dead, slumped on the toilet, strangled. Is she someone invited by the bride's family, or the groom's? Neither one. Total stranger...or so they say. The thirty-fourth book in the Alex Delaware series comes out tomorrow, February 5, 2019. I read it free and early thanks to Net Galley and Random House Ballantine.

Kellerman is a child psychiatrist, and his knowledge and experience dealing with children and their families provides him with a rare ability to invent quirky but believable characters. Here we find a wedding reception unfolding in a seedy building that used to be a strip club, and this provides the world's tackiest wedding theme. All the women—including the bride—are supposed to dress to look "hot." The groom's family, a more conservative, scholarly bunch, are less than delighted, but they bear it stoically, till someone finds a dead guest in the loo. The bride—already turned bridezilla—is just undone. How could someone ruin her big day like this? How thoughtless. They should have killed that woman somewhere else. Or maybe on a different day.

This series never fails to please me. Once again, Detective Milo Sturgis gets the call; once again, his best pal Alex is tapped to analyze a young guest, and from there he becomes further involved in the case.

There have been other books in the series that pushed this improbable situation too far, with Alex the doctor donning a Kevlar vest to go chase and apprehend bad guys with Milo. This time I find Alex's involvement much more believable. On the one hand, he still does things that doctors advising cops never do, but limiting Alex's participation to interviews held either in his office or at the police station wouldn't make for good fiction. All we want is to believe. Kellerman helps us along by creating a strong friendship bond that makes Milo and Alex want to work together, and that's coupled with Milo's unpopularity among his colleagues due to the fact that he's gay. Nobody else wants to get in the car and go places with Milo, and Alex does; and after all, the police do employ him, so it's not like some random civilian is partnered with Milo. I thought this was finessed nicely this time around.

Kellerman always writes strong dialogue that includes some very funny bits here and there, and the pages turn rapidly. It's a lot of fun to read, and if I hadn't been able to get the galley for this one, I'd have hunted it down later at the library rather than miss out.

Highly recommended for fans of the genre.

Cheryl says

Bridezilla and Corpse Couture

This is one of the few series that I have followed all the way from the beginning. This is the 34th book in the series and it started with WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS back in 1985 - 34 years ago and 34 books.

I have appreciated author Kellerman's consistency in this L.A. world he's created with L.A. Police Lieutenant Milo Sturgis and consulting psychologist Dr. Alex Delaware. I like the friendship between the two unlikely men. I like Robin, Alex's partner, and their French Bulldog Blanche.

In this installment, an unidentified woman is savagely murdered in the restroom at a skanky (my opinion) wedding reception that is taking place in a former strip joint.

Milo and Alex are called in to investigate and this leads them from a country vet to a philanderer to a University - from low income shovels to penthouses. I enjoyed the mystery and, as always, I enjoyed the characters.

I highly recommend this next in a long line of psychological thrillers from Kellerman.

I received this book from Random House through Net Galley in the hopes that I would read it and leave an unbiased review.
