



Nursery Crimes

Ayelet Waldman

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"Ayelet Waldman has given birth to a fresh new franchise with her Mommy-Track mysteries. Juliet Applebaum is smart, fearless, and completely candid about life as a full-time mom with a penchant for part-time detective work."--Sue Grafton

A public defender turned stay-at-home mom, Juliet Applebaum is bored with playdates and trips to the park--so near the end of her second pregnancy, she gets off the mommy track to track down a murderer. . . . Juliet isn't too surprised when her feisty, tantrum-throwing two-year old daughter doesn't get into Hollywood's premier preschool--but she's shocked and suspicious when the school's principal is killed in a hit-and-run accident. Against the advice of her screenwriter husband, and with her rambunctious toddler in tow, Juliet heads to the local playground to dig up some dirt on a disgruntled studio executive whose daughter wasn't offered a place in the school. But she has some surprising new suspects to consider when her investigation takes her into a seedy on-line newsgroup--and the most dangerous parts of the human heart.

"[Juliet is] a lot like Elizabeth Peters's warm and humorous Amelia Peabody--a brassy, funny, quick-witted protagonist."--*Houston Chronicle*

Nursery Crimes Details

Date : Published July 1st 2001 by Berkley (first published January 1st 2000)

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Author : Ayelet Waldman

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From Reader Review Nursery Crimes for online ebook

Clare O'Beara says

I've read a few of this series and they were unusual, well-focused and just right for someone with kids, who can't concentrate on too many plot twists and levels of detail for long.

The amateur sleuth has been a public defender but now she's a stay-home mother who is looking for preschools, attending play-dates and funerals and all kinds of things that women do instead of being at work. She still can't help investigating crimes and in this book a pre-school owner has been run over. The kids are pretty good kids I have to say, and the good mother comes to the fore and puts their needs first.

Christine US says

It was cute - i liked it well enough, but it's not going to win anything or go down as a "best read ever". I read it in a few hours, it moved quickly.

My problem with it will be a spoiler so I won't explain, but ultimately - I find the authors close-mindedness of relationships to be frustrating and judgmental.

Janet Robel says

I usually love cozy mysteries but I draw the line at a heavily pregnant mom going around trying to solve a murder and almost getting herself killed in the process.

Marc Nash says

This fairly cosy (by Los Angeles standards) detective thriller fizzed along at a breezy enough pace, until I guessed the killer with 50 pages to go. Lost a star for that.

*-months pregnant mother already of 1 ex-Public defender isn't taking terribly well to the life of a stay at home mum and converts herself into a de facto PI. A few nice lines such as - "In L.A., being star struck is one's civic duty".

Written by the wife of Michael Chabon. But it's not very feminist to put it like that.

Can't imagine I'll read another one, the mother juggling diapers with clues schtick would only work once for me I think.

Aaron says

This book was so incredibly predictable. I called every "turn" that was in this book. The author tries to be

funny and witty but comes off as dumb. I actually ended up throwing this book at the wall when I was done because I was hoping that it would not end the way I suspected it would...which it did.

Kaethe says

I give you the extensive notes I made about this earlier:

"#1. The one about the preschool principal."

Okay, sometimes it can be hard figuring out which book is which in a series, so that's why I noted #1. [Thanks, goodreads, for addressing that, by the way]. But "preschool principal"? Whatever. The fun thing about Waldman's mysteries isn't the mystery. It's the interaction between the mother, the father, the baby, and society. In the "write what you know" vein, Waldman has a new mother trying to decide whether or not to stay home or continue working as a public defender. And she's pregnant. And her husband's a writer. So there's a whole bunch of madcap family stuff that is funny as hell. That's why you'd read it. And the rest in the series.

Mattia Ravasi says

Part of my 5-Review Extravaganza: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEuM6...>
Featured in my Top 20 Books I Read in 2017

Hilarious and exciting all the way through, with a wonderful protagonist that's both kickass and very relatable. It's a cocktail-novel, it goes down sweet as honey but packs some punch in a few dark-ish pages. Even if you see the ending coming (which you might), the laughs and the off-beat-mother musings more than make up for that.

Ashley FL says

Well written, but this author just annoys me. The main character is so clearly auto-biographical and the author clearly thinks highly of herself. Blech. I am also reading a memoir she wrote and it can be hard to tell them apart. For someone who decries the idea of parents judging each other, she is awfully sure that she is doing the best possible job.

Lauren says

I wanted to enjoy this book and usher on to a new series of fluffy mysteries. Alas, not as enjoyable as I had hoped. The author is clearly attempting to write what she knows but it isn't as interesting as it could be. This feels more like a book about motherhood with a mystery thrown in rather than a mystery with a crime solving mother.

Our protagonist is a heavily pregnant mother of a two year old. She is an Ivy League educated former

attorney now stay at home mom. Her husband is a screen writer and the two of them have a loving a close relationship. While she and her husband are attempting to secure a spot for their precious monster Ruby at a top pre-school, they stumble across the murder of the director of the pre-school.

A lot of this book is set up. It is setting the scene for the forthcoming series. However, I did not find our protagonist that likeable. The setting of LA and the mixing in of the Hollywood scene added a drop of interest but not enough. I also found (not that this is the author's fault per se) the use of technology in this book as attempting to be cutting edge. But this book was written/published in 2000. Her illustration of internet chatting and computer sleuthing was a might painful. Again not truly her fault given that a lot has happened in 11 years.

This book was only ok. I am toying with the idea of reading the next in the series to see if her writing improves. I cannot say I was rushing to finish, the book was just short and very simple. I will say that the writer doesn't gloss over pains of pregnancy or childrearing - she states front and center that at times her daughter is hard to handle and being a stay at home mom is difficult.

Jennifer A.M. says

Nursery Crimes by Ayelet Waldman (Mommy Track Series #1)

Juliet Applebaum is a stay-at-home mom who used to be a public defender. Being a stay-at-home mom isn't always her cup of tea, but she's trying to make it work. With a new baby on the way and her daughter almost 3 years old, Juliet and her husband attempt to enroll their precocious daughter in a prestigious Hollywood preschool. While it's no real shock that rambunctious Ruby doesn't get in, it is a shock when the preschool's director is run down that evening and killed. Juliet can't help but wonder who did it. Was it an angry parent? Her cheating husband? You can take the mom out of work, but you can't take the investigative work out of the mom.

This is a fun book for a couple of reasons. The storyline and mystery are pretty well-written. That said these books are extremely easy reads. I only have about 4% brain power after my daughter goes to bed at night and I still managed to grasp everything in the book and follow along with the investigations twists and turns. I also enjoy the character of Juliet because she is the kind of stay-at-home mom I can relate to. She loves her kids and wants to be there with them and for them, but she longs for a career and life that is just her own. She hasn't found a way to have both successfully, and in many ways resents that. It's honestly refreshing. Juliet and her husband also work well together as a parenting team, which is a nice element.

Nursery Crimes is the first book in a series of seven books all with the same protagonist. Book #2 is The Big Nap. That one is next on my list.

Wendy says

The 1st in the Mommy-Track Mystery series. With Sue Grafton's endorsement of "Kinsey Millhone would

approve" I just had to pick it up. It was a good read. It was interesting to read her take on going from a career to a stay at home mom. You won't read stuff like this in any parenting magazine, "Anyone who tells you that having a child doesn't completely and irrevocably ruin your life is lying. As soon as that damp little bundle of poop and neediness lands in your life, it's all over. Everything changes. Your relationship is destroyed. Your looks are shot. Your productivity is devastated. And you get stupid. Dense. Thick. Pregnancy and lactation make you dumb. That's a proven, scientific fact."

It's a little over the top, but some of it is spot on. I plan on reading the next in the series.

Colleen says

The subtitle "A Mommy-Track Mystery" caught my eye because I've been on the mommy track a long time! I should be able to relate to this detective more than those in other mysteries, right? At times I could relate to her, especially during her interactions with her daughter, Ruby. The problem is that this book just wasn't very good. I gave it two stars but it really deserved only 1 1/2. The biggest problem, and it's a big one for a mystery, is that the mystery wasn't engaging, or interesting, or even much of a mystery. And, as our mommy-track crime fighter, Juliet, gets closer to solving "who-dun-it," it gets even less interesting and more predictable. Why would Juliet want to solve the mystery of the murder of a woman who she met for all of ten minutes and who rejected her daughter from her "prestigious" preschool? Why would she put her life on the line (and her unborn baby's) confronting narcissistic, power-crazed film executives and cheatin' spouses to solve the murder of this woman? There's lots of Los Angeles film industry name-dropping in this book so it shouldn't surprise me that the story seems like an amalgam of movies such as "Legally Blonde" and "Fargo." I don't know if Waldman's strength lies in being a crime writer. She's getting rave reviews for her new book, Red Hook Road, (which is why I read this book) so maybe she should stick to serious literature. This is an amateurish attempt at a mystery. And if this is the most interesting case Juliet gets to solve, I think I'd just stay on the mommy track.

Shelley Giusti says

I have always been a fan of Independent bookstores and when I found this book on the shelf, it caught my attention from the start. I had not heard of the author before but after reading the first page I knew it was going to be a hoot. And I will tell you, it did not disappoint.

This is a great debut to what I think will be a fun-filled series. Juliet Applebaum and her little girl Ruby are the star of this book. Juliet is pregnant again, she is full time mom and amatuer sluth on the side when murder calls. She has all the knowledge of the law as she was a public defender before pregnancies. So when things go awry and a murder takes place she is determined to find out who the killer before they find out she is sleuthing and come after her.

The twist and turns will keep you on your seat in eagerness to see what will happen next. You won't want to put it down. Ruby is witty and sassy and Juliet is wiry and fun. You will be laughing out loud with every page.

A witty and humorous read that will have you up late in the night reading.

Mary says

Well, since Sue Grafton approved I had to read it. The mystery itself was rather weak but the heavily pregnant "detective" with a toddler in tow was fun. It would definitely be hard to go from being a public defender to a mother of two. Instead of losing her mind or maybe because she already has lost her mind she becomes a detective...will look good on her resume at some point, I am sure. Interaction with her whole family was entertaining and the writing style is easy to read and focussed. I enjoyed this book. Easy fun read if that is what you are looking for.

Katherine Tomlinson says

This is not really a cozy, but more like a chick lit book with a mystery plot. Juliet's skill-set seems rather contrived and the concept of a heavily pregnant, ex-public defender tracking down criminals because she's bored with the "mommy track" seems unlikely to connect with the public. The supporting characters (so important in a series, whether it's books or television) lack the quirk factor and none of them are particularly interesting. The insider stuff relating to Peter's career as a screenwriter won't interest people who don't actually work "in the industry."
