

LoveReading4kids Reader reviews of The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow by Katherine Woodfine

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading4kids members.

Rose Hopkins, age 9

*First things first, I love the front cover, it's incredible. The story itself is just as good. I love the mystery, excitement and sadness in the book. Even the sadness is great as it means the happy ending is more triumphant and special. The book is a mystery based in the past where a girl is blamed for the robbery of the clockwork sparrow. To prove she's innocent she must solve the crime. **A breathtaking book, chock a block with excitement and you never know what's going to happen next.***

Katie, age 10

A brilliant historical detective novel – I read it in one sitting and couldn't put it down! The characters were really believable and the story was so exciting. My few favourite!

I love all detective stories so I knew I'd like this one before I even started reading, but I couldn't believe how much I loved it. Sophie, the main character, works in a new department store in London that is so beautifully described I felt like I was there. One night there is a robbery and a precious Clockwork sparrow is stolen. Slowly, Sophie makes friends with some of the other staff in the store and almost by accident they begin to try to solve the mystery. The store is almost like a character in the story and I wish it was real. Can't wait for the



next one in this series – there will definitely be one!

Celeste Phelan, age 13

An incredible read full of mystery, wonder and adventure.

Sophie Taylor is a rich girl who has been given a job at the wonderful Sinclair's department store. However, the other girls are not all too kind to her. Sophie befriends a girl called Lilian Rose and this is when the excitement begins. The priceless clockwork sparrow was stolen without a trace. Who was to blame? Together our bold heroines crack codes, in order to bring the dastardly villains to justice.

Sophie is a very determined character, who refuses to let the villains slip through her fingers. Furthermore, all fantastic code breakers need help, so Lilian and Billy are ready to help.

Sinclair's department store is described as the most magical and wondrous place in London. The staff are pristine and chandeliers hang from the ornate ceiling. There are gleaming glass counters and an array of objects for the customers to admire. Nothing is out of place in the perfect department store.

Throughout this book excitement, mystery and iced buns lie around every corner. I was often on the edge of my seat and thrilled by the bravery of our heroines. I loved the fact that it was set in an "older" London. This is because, in the twenty first century there are DNA tests and other scientific methods making it easier to catch villains. However, Sophie and Lilian did not have the advanced technology that we have today, so it made catching the villains a lot harder and a lot more intriguing.

*I would thoroughly recommend this book to children of 11+ as it is a very exciting and mysterious read. Children who enjoy comical detective dramas, like 'Murder Most Unladylike', would adore this book. I would defiantly read more books by this author. **This is now one of my top ten.***

Adiella Norridge, age 11

Really good, really gripping: a mystery you have to read!

This mystery is set around a new London department store called Sinclair's. The night before the store's grand opening priceless artefacts are stolen from the exhibition hall and one of the workers is shot. Sophie works in the department store and along with her friends is determined to solve this mystery.

I found this novel really gripping with lots of unexpected twists and turns. It's brilliantly written with a great central idea. It's told from the points of view of different characters, so you can see what is going on through different people's eyes, which is quite clever because they are not always in the same place at the same time, so you can find out things that they don't necessarily tell the other characters.

My favourite character is Lil, who is really determined even though she doesn't seem like a character who would go round trying to solve mysteries.

You have to read this book!

Indiana Morgan, age 10

I found this book a real page-turner, it has murders, spies and gangs of thieves. Thrilling!

Stubborn and determined Sophie has been left an orphan at 14 years of age. Abandoned at an unattractive all girls lodging house, she has to make her own way in life. She finds work at the luxurious department store, Sinclairs, where she makes three friends: opinionated model, Lil; mysterious homeless boy, Joe and detective in the making, Billy.

On the night before the store's grand opening there's a robbery and murder. Sophie is cast under suspicion! She and her friends set out to prove their innocence by unravelling a dark plot of conspiracy and go on to save the day.

I found this book a real page-turner; it has murders, spies and gangs of thieves. Katharine Woodfine submerges you in Sophie's world until you are willing her and her friends to succeed. With characters you can relate to, an exciting plot and a shocking, villainous twist I would recommend this book to anyone who wants a roller coaster ride of a read with lots of emotion and more depth than most childrens' books. Thrilling!

Cait Galbraith, age 9

A ladylike mystery that was shocking and mysterious with every new chapter. A fantastic book that was incredibly unique.

'The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow' was set in London's most exclusive department store, a place for the rich and famous. Burt gets murdered whilst working at Sinclair's which then leads to Sophie, Lil, Billy and Joe to try and

solve the mystery. They all work hard together cracking codes, escaping from villains and preventing a huge disaster at Sinclair's at the opening party.

I really enjoyed this book because it was mysterious and full of unexpected twists. It was really interesting reading a book set in the early 1900's.

I would rate this book 4/5

Hannah Minton, age 9

*'The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow' may sound boring but open it up and it's bursting with surprises. Sophie (the main character) is described at first as an ordinary woman and then later more detail of her along with the setting enters. That is just one reason why I suggest this book to all adventure-story lovers. Another reason I recommend it is the story's plot. As I've mentioned Sophie is the main character. She gets down to a lot of trouble at the new store Sinclair's but luckily Sophie has some friends. Together they push through doing whatever they need to do to help Sophie. Secrets, detectives, codes, and covering things over. Another thing is the 'The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow' **is fast paced and there is always something going on.** And I guess you're thinking what has this got to do with a clockwork sparrow? Well, you'll have to wait and see. There's only one thing left to say. **I couldn't put this book down.***

Charlotte, age 9

A thrilling page-turner of a book. Loved every second of it.

The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow' is a brilliant book about a girl called Sophie and her career at a new shopping emporium. Little does she know that her career will lead to murder, mysteries and notorious villains. She will go through accusations, interrogations and even being sacked. Will she survive the escapade?

I really enjoyed this book because it was exciting and adventurous. I would highly recommend this book to readers age 9+ that like adventures and mysteries.

Holly Wilkins, age 11

Page-turner, amazing, number 1 book.

Sophie works in a new shop called Sinclair's, which has lots of precious jewellery including the Clockwork Sparrow. She meets Lil and they become best friends. When the Clockwork Sparrow goes missing, Sophie is blamed and she is sacked from her job in the millinery department. Can Billy (a porter), Joe and Lil help Sophie prove that she is not responsible for the theft?

You will never want to put this book down as you'll want to find out what happens next. Great for anyone who likes mystery stories.

I hope there will be more books about Sophie and her friends.

It would be great as a movie too.

I give this book 10 out of 10.

Frances Garey, age 7

I really enjoyed 'The Mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow' because I like detective stories especially when the person isn't supposed to be solving the mystery.

I like Sophie Taylor because she's always determined. I enjoyed it when she had just escaped from a locked room and was creeping around the building because it was a bit creepy and dark. It is set in the nineteenth century so her shop-girl job is quite old-fashioned. When she loses her job and goes home to find her room tipped upside down I felt sorry for her. But, in the end, she gets to be a detective to try and solve the mystery of the Clockwork Sparrow with the help of her good friends. Her friends, Lilian Rose, Billy Parker and Joe, are nice to her so I liked them too. I would definitely recommend this book to other people who enjoy exciting stories.

Beth Urquhart, age 8

*This book starts as a bit of a slow burner. This belies the fact that later in the book it is quite action packed from the middle and definitely by the end, but it takes the time at the start of the story to flesh out the characters and set the scene. I loved all the details about the shop and it made me think of the series 'The Paradise' on telly. (It might make others think of Mr. Selfridge but I have never seen that). There are strong male and female characters and as long as boys got past the opening chapters where Sophie is the lead, I'm sure they would be drawn in by Jem and Billy's characters. **The mystery keeps you on your toes and just when you think you know "who dunnit" another***

mystery is revealed. I think this is one of the better written books that we have reviewed/read lately but maybe it just reads more easily to adult ears as it is designed for a slightly older age bracket. I think an intrepid y4 or 5 could enjoy this book but it might be more suited to Y6 onwards. That is more due to the complexity of the story and the more complex language rather than because there is any bad language or excess violence. The story might also interest children to help them see what life was like for children in that time period and how different it is from today.

Heather Greenan, age 11

I found this book exciting because it was full of mystery.

I really enjoyed this book because it was set in the olden days but even so the characters were still really adventurous.

My favourite character in the book was Lil because she is not what you first expect her to be. The story was fast flowing but in the middle it got a bit slow and I found it tough. I really liked how Mr Cooper had a secret identity, it made me want to finish and read on!

Overall I would rate this book 8/10 and I think it is more suitable for older children as they will be able to understand the plot better.

Noah Hall, age 9

This story is an interesting detective mystery set in Victorian London.

This story is an interesting detective mystery. It contains jewel thieves, international espionage, kidnap and murder. The author sets it in Victorian London, using lots of detailed historical description.

Sophie, the main character, works at Sinclair's - a posh, brand new department store. She makes friends with a boy called Billy and a girl called Lil (they work at Sinclair's too). Together they meet an ex-member of the Baron's boys and he becomes their friend. He is called Joe. The baddy in this story is called The Baron. He is an elusive mysterious crime lord.

I liked the book because it made me keep on guessing what was going to happen next. If I went to Victorian London, the description from this book would really help me and I would know what to expect. The only criticism I would have is that it is too long at 312 pages with small print. I would recommend this book

to older kids who like murder mysteries and historical drama.