



Spitfire

Annette Sandoval

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Twenty-eight-year-old Tomi Reyes is a documentary filmmaker who moonlights as a receptionist to pay the bills. It's a pretty easy gig—until she receives an unexpected promotion, and her somewhat interesting life goes totally insane.

For starters, her new boss, Scott Martin, morphs from nice guy into creepy dictator in the space of, like, five seconds. Then Justin Thyme, Tomi's occasional boyfriend, is found murdered and stuffed inside his refrigerator. Before Tomi can get over the shock, her friend Whim meets the same gruesome fate. Tomi has a sneaking suspicion that new-boss-Scott has a hand in all of this, but the evidence to both of the murders is pointing to her! She is wondering how she'll look in an orange jumper, when her childhood pal is assigned to the case. Nicholas "Nickels" Turino, is now an FBI agent, and a hot one at that. When the killer starts stalking Tomi—going as far as turning her fridge into her waiting tomb—the not-so-swift hand of justice drives Tomi to act. She sets out to unmask the killer herself or die trying. Seriously underdressed for such a cold-blooded death, Tomi is determined to live.

Spitfire Details

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From Reader Review Spitfire for online ebook

Angela Risner says

I know it's strange to call a book "adorable" but it really is. I smiled a lot through the whole story.

Our main character is Tomi Reyes, one of the few books I've read with a Latina heroine. Tomi is a documentary filmmaker, but is working as a receptionist to pay the bills. She gets promoted to be an assistant to Scott, who is an executive at the firm. Scott is married, but you know the saying: Just because there's a goalie, doesn't mean you can't score! Well, he wants to score with Tomi, not the other way around. Soon, Tomi's life starts taking a downward turn, with her ex-boyfriend found murdered and stuffed inside of a refrigerator.

I loved this book. I think if you enjoy Janet Evanovich's Stephanie Plum series, you'll enjoy this book. I think that the author has a lot of talent, and I'm hoping that this is just the first of many books featuring Tomi's adventures. It's very well-written; the characters leap off of the page, er Kindle screen.

Highly recommend.

Diego Elio says

The author claims the protagonist is 28 years old, yet make her behave more like a kid, a 16 years old. I'm not complaining about the potty mouth (pretty sure I swear more than that anyway), but the whole way she's described not taking her job seriously at all (including at the end of the book stating that she's been following all kind of on-line courses while idling at work... really? is that part of the author's experience?), or the way she just has to be reminded about what is and what is not legal, when it's an obvious thing, again the rebellion is more teenager-like than almost-thirty adult.

Other already have noted how sexualized is the book -- I would point out in particular that not only it's sexualized but part of it is just to fill the pages so that you increase the count. Why else would she spend a full page listing genres of various porn out there? And describing some as well. There are tons of filler over the book, which is probably why it reads fast (the only positive side): the "lists" she makes up on all the most disparate things and without rhyme or reason to the story, the half page of "dialogue" where two characters just list words that sound funny (and obviously has to have "smegma" in it just to remind us that she can use as many dirty words as any other author, if not more), and so on.

Again, the problem is not the dirty talk per se, after all it's an adult novel, but the fact that it's there just to make the protagonist as crass as you can make her. She's crass, and shallow, and lacks so much common sense that I was disappointed she was still alive by the end of the book. So one of your friends has been killed, and whawt you do? You turn yourself into a detective *while ignoring any single possible precaution*. Even when you spot that one of the witnesses has "murderer tatoos" (and how the heck did you know how to do that?), you go back seeing them alone.

Finally, the last straw for me is that I can honestly partially understand how women feel when they get objectified in books and TV, as this novel objectifies men instead: almost every single male character tries to get the protagonist in bed because of her cup size, as explicitly noted by the author. The only one that ever does not stare at her (and seriously, you want to talk with the DA, you go dressed like a prostitute outside of a porn shop?) is told to be gay right away, and that's it, the whole plot point disappears in the night.

I'm worried by the readers who said they identify themselves in the protagonist. Because she is just a dumb, shallow person, to which men are only attracted by her physical appearance (and I assume that's the only reason why she got hired, given that she explicitly doesn't have a work ethic), sustaining what can only be seen as sexual harassment from her boss simply because she wants to eat at restaurants she wouldn't be able to afford to begin with.

Alison says

This book was a little frustrating, because there was a lot I really liked about it but there were some really big plot holes, so I couldn't really be satisfied with it. The heroine was really funny and refreshing, the book moved along pretty well, and it was mostly good light reading so I really wanted to like it, but again, there were some gaping holes in the plot that kind of ruined it for me. I wish there had been a little bit better editing of this and then it would have been a really fun book.

Tien says

One of the funniest mystery novels that I've read. Tomi Reyes is a recently promoted executive assistant who wants to be a documentary film maker and spends her time videoing bad pick-up lines from dudes who hit on her and exchanging Yo Mama jokes with her best friend. She's drawn into a murder investigation when an on and off again ex-boyfriend and a mutual friend from their circle are murdered and she's the prime suspect. The novel revolves around Tomi trying to figure out who the murderer was while fending off her creepy/stalky boss and reconnecting with a childhood friend who's now an FBI agent. It was a light fast-paced read with clever dialogue and witty jokes.

Dan says

Tomi is a documentary filmmaker that works as a receptionist to make ends meet. When she gets promoted to personal assistant to Scott Martine, her friends start getting murdered. And to top it off she is the primes suspect. Trying to clear her name, catch the killer, get her work done and keep her boss's hands off her keeps her busy throughout.

But this book written with sarcastic dialogue, that it is more fun to participate in Tomi's misadventures than try and figure out the mystery. This delightful novel is fast paced with no boring overkill and hilarious at points. Makes for a wonderful summer read!

Ms. Jared says

I really liked this one. It was funny and irreverent and fast paced and it takes place in the fabulous Bay Area so what's not to love? It's a light, easy read, and fun so I recommend it. Betcha didn't expect THAT from a murder mystery, huh?

Jool says

This book - the plot - just got too silly and unbelievable for me. I'm not into the slapstick female detective type books.

?Karlyn P? says

This book is being widely spammed across GR, something I consider terrible user etiquette and in poor taste. Not sure if this is the author, but there appears to be a personal motive.

Tricia says

Spitfire

By: Annette Sandoval

Tomi Reyes works as a receptionist for an architectural firm. Her ex-boyfriend is killed and she is being questioned in his murder.

This is a quick read that is funny with amusing dialogue and the characters are likeable for the most part. I am not sure how I feel about the lead though. She is 28 but seems a little immature compared to the other characters and just something about her I didn't like.

It wasn't the Yo Mamma jokes as they were pretty funny. I get her joking around and humor but for several chapters I liked her but then she would make

some comment and then I didn't, I can't really put my finger on anything specific.

Another reason I liked this book was that it's a light read. The characters that die, we don't get to know them in depth.

We know a little background and that they are well liked and good friends with the rest of the main characters.

The story itself is entertaining and page turning but predictable and forgettable after reading.

I think this is a good book to read in between genres. In my case I read a lot of horror and thrillers and this is a nice change of pace. I think this would make a great beach/poolside read.

Tina Hayes says

"Spitfire" by Annette Sandoval is a mystery full of romance, not to mention laugh-out-loud funny.

Tomi Reyes has just been promoted to executive assistant, but her new boss Scott might be more than she bargained for. He seems to want more from her than just her office performance, but he's married and Tomi ain't having it. When her friend with benefits is found dead, stuffed inside his refrigerator, and Tomi is the prime suspect, Scott steps up to try and help her, as does a gorgeous FBI agent she knows, which pisses Scott off beyond all reason.

As Tomi friends continue to end up dead, she tries to find the real killer before she gets killed herself.

I loved this author's voice and plan to read more of her works. It would be great to see a sequel to this, since Tomi is such a great character.

Candace Grand says

Terrible. My dog is a better writer.

Kirk says

Ok book, not to be sexist, but this book was geared more toward a female perspective. More romance than action / suspense.

Ian says

Annette Sandoval has written three books, but this is (as far as I can tell) her first foray into fiction. For that reason I'm going to treat it as a first novel.

Spitfire is rough around the edges but despite all its faults I couldn't help liking the book. Tomi's boss is possessive, misogynistic and vindictive. She spends her days trying to keep on his good side while also dodging his amorous advances. Thrown into the mess that her life is becoming, someone is killing her friends and it won't be long before the murderer moves on to her.

What I liked

I really like the setting for this book. I've seen a few dysfunctional work places and I suspect it's not all that uncommon, but I can't think of a book which is set in that environment. The heroine is American but with Mexican heritage and I think that worked well. I can easily see this book becoming a very successful series of quirky mystery novels.

What I didn't like

Lists. There are an awful lot of lists in this book and they don't really add anything to the story. The epilogue is basically just a list of bad pick-up lines. It reminded me of authors who insist on inserting recipes into their novels. There is also a little too much information in this book. As an author it's important for her to do her research and to know things like police procedures, if for no other reason than to keep the book as accurate and real as possible. As a reader, I don't need to know them unless they are important to the story.

Annette Sandoval has the potential to be a very good writer. She's not quite there yet, but I don't regret reading this at all. I'll probably follow her in the future and see what she makes of herself.

Scott says

Tomi Reyes, the heroine of Annette Sandoval, dares you not to love her. A buxom Latina blessed with sarcasm as biting as her curves are soft, Tomi lives her life to the fullest while maintaining her slacker detachment. Of all the people we meet in "Spitfire," it's only natural that Tomi becomes the seeming target of a serial killer.

As the novel opens, Tomi is yet another twenty-something who is striving for Something More while living a hum-drum existence. Working as a receptionist, she manages to earn degrees in documentary filmmaking . . . which she puts into such sophomoric projects as documentaries on pick-up lines. Her life consists of hobnobbing with her eclectic band of friends, dining out whenever possible and living the bohemian life in San Francisco. Nice work, if you can get it.

That is, until a serial killer starts depositing her dead friends' bodies in refrigerators. Could the killer be her new boss, the WASP yuppie Scott? The police think that Tomi's the killer, but she is blessed with a guardian angel in the form of FBI special agent Nickles Turino, a dreamboat who just happens to be Tomi's childhood best friend.

As you will see, author Annette Sandoval believes in cliches as well as coincidences. Oh, and she also believes in ending lots of sentences in exclamation points! So if you like exclamation points, you will love this book!

In many ways, Tomi is a wonderful heroine. Irreverent, sexy and funny (although didn't the "Your mama is . . ." humor phase run its course years ago?), Tomi is a refreshing change from the usual leads in murder mysteries - no burnt-out homicide detective, no scion of privilege slumming with the commoners, etc. But darn it if she isn't the most self-absorbed piece of work to come down the escalator in a long while. And the murder mystery, such as it is, has gaps wide enough for even Tomi's impressive . . . endowments to move through unmolested.

Sandoval keeps the pages flying pleasantly enough, but ultimately "Spitfire" rises to the level of minor airplane book - one that will pass the time between stops just fine, but hardly anything you'll rue leaving behind in your hotel. For a book that compares itself to the work of Elmore Leonard and Cheech Marin on the back cover, that's missing the mark.

Anelie says

I enjoyed this book. It was a quick but satisfying read. I figured out before they did who the killer was and that it was more complicated than it appeared but I enjoyed the main character and her friends. I too found her immature but not unwilling to grow up (which I find annoying in both fictional and real people). I also liked her devotion to her family. I also liked her recognition that, for her, her job was not her career, something I can identify with. I did find it interesting that she was unable to tolerate boredom and would plug into her devices T sometimes inappropriate times but apparently that's common now.
