



Unraveled

S.X. Bradley

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Sixteen year old math whiz, Autumn, spends her days reading about serial killers and dreaming of becoming an FBI Profiler. She never dreams her first case will be so personal. Her world is shattered when she comes home from school and discovers her murdered sister's body on the living room floor. When the initial evidence points to a burglary gone wrong, Autumn challenges the police's theory because of the personal nature of the crime. Thinking that finding the killer will bring her family back together, she conducts her own investigation using her affinity for math and forensics, but her plan backfires and her obsession with the case further splinters her family.

When her investigation reveals the killer is someone she knows, Autumn offers herself up as bait and sets a dangerous trap to unmask his true nature and to obtain a confession for her sister's murder.

Unraveled Details

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From Reader Review Unraveled for online ebook

Kimber Wheaton says

Unraveled begins with a shocking bang. The imagery and emotions of the opening scene are gritty; they'll take your breath away. This book is not for the faint of heart. It explores the pain and grief faced by those left behind after a murder. Depressing at times, this book might make you rant in anger...I guarantee you'll cry.

Autumn is a great character. She is 'gifted' (her words), though, she seems a bit more of a savant when it comes to mathematics than the word gifted implies. Because she found her sister's body, the police zero in on her first. This of course gets leaked, and she becomes the victim of heartless gossip. Her relief is short lived when the police nab a suspect because she doesn't believe the man is guilty. Autumn starts her own investigation in secret, using her obsession with forensics to help her. She is fueled by rage and an overwhelming need for justice for her lost sister.

I despised Autumn's mother. Her treatment of Autumn was deplorable. Everyone handles grief differently, but her mother just grated on my nerves. There were so many times I wanted to slap the woman, grief or no grief. Though it does increase the reader's empathy for Autumn. I was never sure of my feelings for her father; sometimes he was great but others he needed a swift kick in the butt.

Two characters I loved were Autumn's cousin Eduardo and romantic interest Caedon. Eduardo is so supportive of Autumn when her world, including her parents, are crashing down around her. He also helps with her investigation. Caedon, well who wouldn't love him? He's handsome, sweet, supportive...everything any girl would want in a boyfriend. Caedon brought light into Autumn's life when she needed it most, supporting her and standing up for her when needed.

Toward the end, when Autumn's plan to catch the killer is unveiled, I just about died. After going through an emotional ringer, I really needed a good ending. I wasn't disappointed. Bradley does a great job wrapping up the story. The ending was realistic not sappy 'and they all lived happily ever after'. The mystery is well paced and unfolds nicely. I couldn't even begin to guess about who the killer was until about 2/3 of the way through.

I recommend this novel to high school and up with the following caveat: This is a difficult subject for some people. Readers need to go into this one with their eyes open. If you enjoy a well done mystery with romantic elements, I highly suggest adding *Unraveled* to your to-read list.

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

I love a good mystery, one that keeps me on my toes and guessing up until the very last moments and that is exactly what I got in *Unraveled*.

I really liked Autumn, from the very first page I could feel her grief and devastation at losing her sister and my heart went out to her. As if that wasn't bad enough, the cops suspect her of being the very same person who took her sister away from her only moments before.

Determined to find her sister's killer, prove that she is innocent and oh yeah, fall in love for the first time,

Autumn has her hands full.

This had just the right amount of mystery, romance and action to keep me turning the pages. I really liked Autumn and how she wasn't your typical heroine. She isn't really kick butt (although she tries), she isn't the popular cheer leading type, in fact just the opposite. She is the nerd. The girl who has been doing her parent's taxes since she was six years old. The “weird math chick”.

I liked that about her. She didn't fall into the stereotypical girl that most YA books have right now. Heck, the girl studied cold cases and serial killers for goodness sakes!

I loved her cousin Eduardo. He was probably my favorite character actually. I really enjoyed how sweet and sincere he was and how he loved “Fall” for who she was and saw past her strangeness and quirkiness. Her Papi was pretty great too.

My only complaint was that there was actually some underlining issues in this that I think could have been expanded a little bit more. Something that I can't get too much into because I don't want to spoil anything but I would have liked to see the author expand on it a little more because I really do think it is an important issue and one that many teens (sadly) face.

Really I think this was an intriguing read that kept me guessing. It sort of reminded me of a YA Mary Higgins-Clark. I would definitely give the author a try again in the future.

Kristin (Young Adult Book Haven) says

My Thoughts:

Unraveled was a really interesting read and I definitely enjoyed it, if you are a fan of crime shows and mystery solving then there is no way you wouldn't want to read this one. Bradley has created a great character in Autumn that is everything you want, she is strong and determined, and intelligent, she won't give up until her sister's murderer is found and I couldn't help but feel the same way.

Autumn is a certified math genius and her one dream is to go to MIT and become an FBI profiler, she is forever changed after one day she comes home to find her sister murdered, devastated but determined she is going to use her genius skills to find out who did this to her sister, but along her journey for justice Autumn finds even more than she ever expects to find.

I hoped that I would enjoy this book because I love watching crime shows and get interested in how they find things out the way they do and following the mystery get solved. I definitely got what I was looking for with this book, Autumn takes a different approach to solving the crime then you usually see not just following clues around until she found something out but, she used her awesome math skills and really interested me while doing it.

The other aspect that I really enjoyed was Autumn's family, they were a huge and close Latino family and you really felt that throughout the entire book, you felt for everything that they were going through and I also understood how each person fit into their family and how important Autumn's sister Celeste was to each one of them.

Overall, I really enjoyed reading this book, it may sound like it might be a bit of a depressing read but, it didn't read that way at all, there was romance and family, tough issues with dealing with loss, and I enjoyed every bit of it. I was really surprised with so many of the things that happened in the book, as soon as I had guessed anything I ended up being completely wrong and it definitely kept me on the edge of my seat and into the mystery of it all. If you are looking for a contemporary with a mix of mystery I definitely recommend this one!

Crystal says

Talk about a awesome thrill ride that didn't make me nauseous! Unraveled is one of those books that the story sticks with you long after you've read it.

Autumn comes home early from school to pick up some papers she left on the table. What she didn't want to come home to was finding her older sister Celeste on the floor in a pool of blood. Being the only one home and now considered a suspect in her sister's death, Autumn opens up her own investigation in search for her sister's killer.

With help from her cousin Eduardo, Autumn works tirelessly and dangerously to bring the killer out. Will she succeed or become a victim herself?

Let me start off by saying this was a very well written book. The family dynamic is spot on and the characters are full of life. S.X. did an amazing job with Unraveled and I can't wait to see more from this outstanding author.

Linda says

I bought this book from the author at a signing last week. I think that this is a debut book for the author. I was hooked from the very beginning of this story. I liked Autumn, the protagonist, and felt empathy with her as she goes through horrible grief. The author breathed life into the characters and especially, their emotions. My only complaint is that there are quite a few typos. Luckily, the story is that good that they only cause a minor irritation.

Think Abby on CSI or Camelyn Mahoney in the Forensic Mysteries by Alane Ferguson. This book is of the same ilk. Sixteen year-old Autumn is a Mathematical genius (geek) who dreams of a future as a Forensic Scientist. Her older sister, Celeste, is everything that Autumn is not: pretty, popular, and a great athlete. She also seems to be their parents' favorite, or so Autumn thinks, but it doesn't bother her because she feels that Celeste deserves it. The story opens with her finding Celeste in their living room stabbed to death. In the aftermath of her sister's murder Autumn watches her family fall apart. But she knows all about forensics and so she starts to investigate on her own and finally, when she realizes that the murderer is someone she knows, she has to set a trap and offer herself up as the bait. I nearly held my breath reading the last few chapters.

I understand that the sequel is being released soon and you can bet that I'll be buying it!

Amy says

I received a free copy from the author for an honest review, so here goes...

I very much enjoyed this book. It was different than anything I've ever read and I think I may read more mystery type books because I liked it so much. The story was compelling and heart-breakingly sad all at the same time (yes, I made up a word). Autumn was an interesting character and I liked reading from her POV. I liked the supporting characters a lot too. I really liked Eduardo. He was a great friend/cousin to Autumn and I loved his nickname for her, Fall. Caedon was such a sweetheart. It was so sweet how he told Autumn he actually had liked her for awhile just hadn't had the nerve to talk to her. Aww!

The twists and turn along the way as Autumn was trying to solve the murder of her sister were enthralling. I was trying to piece it all together myself. I kept changing my mind as new clues were introduced. It was devastating to have the killer revealed and the true nature of their relationship with Celeste. My heart broke for her and the pain she must have been in not to mention the pain she experienced during her murder. All the pain and anguish the family went through, especially mami, made tears well up in my eyes countless times. That's why I was so thrilled that Autumn was able to finally get justice for her sister.

All in all, I really enjoyed this book and I have no qualms about recommending it to my friends and even my students. I think they might enjoy it too!

Crystal Sams says

Pre-analysis based solely on Chapter 1: I am 20 pages in and have already ran into 3 grammatical/editing errors. I hope the entire book is not like this. And I'm also having a hard time connecting with the character, I think maybe the plot jumped the gun, but we'll see. The premise is intriguing so I hope the book gets better.

Post-Analysis: There were quite a few more errors with editing as well as a time-line error. I did get used to the characters by about chapter 5 and was really enjoying the story. I do still believe that the plot come on too quickly (page 1 is pretty fast) and I didn't get a chance to get a feel for Autumn or Celeste before we were into solving the mystery of her death.

I also felt that there would be more math and forensics on the part of Autumn. The blurb on the book made it seem like this was how she was going to solve the case. Besides the story making the police department look like idiots, I also can't believe that a 16 year old would be able to do all that she did in this case, and without getting in trouble for interfering. Nor did I believe that the police would not have gone through the steps that Autumn used to solve the case.

Another big problem that I had was that the ending felt a bit rushed to me, and I didn't like how it played out, that the characters found out who did it then put together a plot of how to oust the killer. I think it should have been apparent to the reader at the same time rather than making us wait for the plan to be played out.

Overall, there were just too many problems for me to really enjoy this book. It was nice easy reading in the middle, and I did enjoy that part, but the bad outweighed it. Maybe 2.5 stars, but I'm rounding down because I just can't give it 3.

Amy Acosta says

Autumn's world is destroyed when she goes home one afternoon and finds her sister dead. Things turn out for the worse when she becomes the main suspect in the case, and even her parents doubt her innocence. Things at school aren't much better...well, except for Caedon Keene, who has assigned himself her protector.

Unraveled by S.X. Bradley is a fast-paced mystery with incredible twists and turns that will leave you on the edge of your seat.

Autumn is a very strong and determined girl. She's gifted and has mad mathematical skills, and I loved how these were incorporated into the story—like her calculating the force of a roundhouse kick, or estimating the height of a suspect. Autumn tries to deal with her sister's death as best as she can while everyone in her family just falls apart. All Autumn wants is to find her sister's murder and return to some semblance of normalcy, but this is extremely difficult as every time she uncovers something new it means reliving the pain all over again. Luckily, Autumn can rely on other people like her cousin Eduardo, her kung fu Sifu, Caedon, and her math geek classmates.

Even in the midst of a tragedy there is a bit of romance. Caedon Keene has the whole 'cute boy next door' thing going on for him, and that he wants to help Autumn through this dark time just makes him all the more sweet and adorable. He actually understands what she's going through with the loss of someone so close, and does his best to be there for her. Though Autumn likes him a lot, her own investigation leads her to suspect him. And what comes after literally broke my heart in two.

The murder investigation kept my eyes glued to the page. Though at one point I grew exasperated because one point was being so obviously ignored, but then right after, the point is cleared and I was like "yeah, calm down, she knows what she's doing." LOL There were also a couple of 'holy crap' moments that had my heart pounding and my brain exploding. It was awesome. After this, I'm definitely interested in reading more YA Mysteries.

Mae Hanley says

Ah, teen angst. But add to that the murder of your sister and you have the makings for some great drama.

In this debut novel S.X. Bradley fills her world with a roller coaster of emotions. Grief. Love. Self-doubt. Love. Envy. Anger. All wrapped up in a brilliant math wizard who can't let the murder of her sister become just another case to the police.

After it's known she's a key suspect, casting doubt of her innocence, even among her family. Autumn trusts few of the remaining people in her life as she questions the police on their methods. Autumn's drive to puzzle solve, leads her to do her own investigation into her sister's murder, not only to help her family begin to heal, but to clear herself. In the process, she enlists the help of a favorite cousin, gains the support of her father, and plots to capture the killer. All while falling in love for the first time.

Check out the story – a total page turner.

Masquerade Crew says

WALKI'S REVIEW

3.5 STARS

Teenage girl Autumn steps home in the middle of a school day and finds her elder sister Celeste dead in the middle of the living room. Soon she finds herself the main suspect. Being a gifted student and rather resourceful, Autumn decides to use her mathematical talent and her forensic knowledge to find the killer.

A fast beginning places the readers at the heart of the story. Celeste, the young cross-country runner, is this heart as she is her parents' beloved daughter, and is somehow easier for them to understand. However it is followed by a bit of a lull before the pace picks up again and carries us to a suspenseful outcome.

The main character, Autumn, is the narrator. She has strong feelings, an equally strong determination, and an awkward position in her family as she'll be the first one to go to university. She wants her parents' love and she wants to prove herself.

Unraveled is an endearing Young Adult novel and a murder mystery, while at the same time it gives us glimpses of some of the difficulties experienced by a gifted student in her school life. S.X. Bradley wrote a captivating novel sprinkled with some food for thought.

ALANA M'S REVIEW

3 STARS

For the most part I really enjoyed this YA Murder Mystery, it was quite fast paced and the developing romance was really sweet, it also makes a nice change to have such an intelligent main character.

That being said there were a few elements that pulled me out of the story. At times I felt the language was too formal for a group of teenagers (no matter how intelligent), and the constant references to Autumn's amazing math's skills became a little annoying after a while, making her come across as quite pretentious. These are all issues that could be fixed during editing.

This is the author's debut novel and overall I think she shows a great deal of promise and I wouldn't hesitate to read more of her work in the future.

Shawna says

I was absolutely hooked from the first chapter on. I liked the fact that some of the less common forensics information was explained in such a way that it wasn't so overly explained that readers who already knew

what they were became bored. There were a couple original aspects to this story that I really found refreshing. First off was the "hot" math teacher, and the fact that she saved Autumn from expulsion when she profiled the principal. Another theme that really isn't too common in books is Autumn's desire to become an FBI agent.

This leads me to a couple of issues I had that knocked this down to a four star book for me. First of all, I felt like the reader was beat over the head about Autumn being gifted. I was tired of it being brought up by chapter 6. Fortunately it seemed to get a little tamed down for the majority of the rest of the book (either that or I got good at paying no attention to it). So if Autumn is this super smart, math geek, FBI prodigy then I have a big issue with the way she reacted at the funeral. (view spoiler) Sorry but that seriously bugs the crap out of me. All in all I really liked the characters, in fact the whole story I was fearful of liking Caedon too much in case he winds up being the murderer. And Voss was such a sympathetic soul throughout the majority of the story it was hard not to feel sorry for him.

Overall I really enjoyed this quick read and will likely read the author's future works.

Buffy Kennedy says

There are a few key points to make about this book. First is that it is at times truly depressing. From the summary, I was expecting that Autumn would be upset over her sister's death and determined to solve the mystery, however I didn't imagine that the book would start off from the time her sister dies. The beginning is chillingly and devastatingly emotional and you follow Autumn through her grief as well as the mystery.

Second, Autumn is smart, strong, and independent. I honestly really liked her character, and the relationships she has with her cousin and her dad. I also greatly enjoyed her friendship with Caedon and how it progressed slowly and naturally. I adored Caedon and was sad to see his part in the climax of the story.

Lastly, the writing itself is pretty good. It's mostly consistent and while I found some of the elements of the mystery factor a little implausible (i.e. cops aren't that incompetent), it was largely a powerful book about grief and healing written very realistically. I didn't like the climax at all, because I don't think Autumn should have handled it herself or in that fashion nor was I particularly surprised. However, I did appreciate the time it took for all the loose ends to come together in the end.

If you're looking for a book about growing up and the bonds of family, and how they're tested in hard times, this is a very good and emotional read. The mystery is also pretty well written, keeping you on your toes until the end. Don't miss out!

Heather Alexander says

16 year old Autumn is a math wiz and a serial killer aficionado, good thing since she wants to be an FBI profiler someday. Autumn doesn't have many friends due to the fact that she is freakishly smart, her only real friends are her older sister Celeste, and her favorite cousin Edwardo. When Celeste comes home from school to find Celeste murdered, she loses it, but it only gets worse when the police question her. As a suspect in her beloved sister's murder and with her family falling apart, as her mother can barely even look at her. Autumn decides to do some investigating herself. With her affinity for math, details, and forensics knowledge, from

years of obsessively reading serial killer books, Autumn sets out to find the killer, with the help of Edwardo. What she ends up finding is not what she expects, and she will have to use all of her smarts to catch the killer. Using herself as bait, with Edwardo and now her father, helping her, she sets up the killer to try and get a confession. Will she make it out ok? Will she get her killer? Read it and find out. O.K., so I grew up a huge fan of Nancy Drew, Trixie Beldon, etc. I love mysteries, and this is a good one. I think we may have our modern day, and much needed, version of Nancy Drew. Only better, because Autumn is a genius. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, not just the story, but the characters, the forensics, the touching moments that made you want to cry, all of it. Even with the problems, this really is a close knit family and it doesn't hurt that the characters last name is Covarubbias, which happens to be my husband's cousin's last name. Made it more personal for me. If you are a mystery lover, young or old, you absolutely must read this book. I loved it and mysteries never go out of style and you are never too old for them. Run and get this book as fast as you can. I will be waiting, tapping foot impatiently, for the next one.

Alana says

For the most part I really enjoyed this YA Murder Mystery, it was quite fast paced and the developing romance was really sweet, it also makes a nice change to have such an intelligent main character.

That being said there were a few elements that pulled me out of the story. At times I felt the language was too formal for a group of teenagers (no matter how intelligent), and the constant references to Autumn's amazing math's skills became a little annoying after a while, making her come across as quite pretentious. These are all issues that could be fixed during editing.

This is the author's debut novel and overall I think she shows a great deal of promise and I wouldn't hesitate to read more of her work in the future.

I give Unraveled 3 out of 5 stars.

Disclaimer: I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

My Rating System:

1 star: I will never post a 1 star review because this means it was so bad I couldn't finish it, and I don't won't publicly rate a book I haven't read all the way through.

2 star: I may have liked the story but it was badly written or it may have been a boring story well written. Something about it kept me reading but I didn't enjoy it.

3 star: A good, enjoyable read. If the description appeals to you I'd recommend reading it.

4 star: A really good book that I thoroughly enjoyed and may even read again. I will want to read other books by the same author. Highly recommend.

5 star: Reserved for books that blew me away and whose characters I can't get out of my head. These are books that I will definitely read again, possibly several times. If I read an e-book version I may even have to go buy a hard copy for my shelves. Why are you still here? Go read this book right now.

Anna says

I got this book to write an honest review so here it is.

Autumn is not an ordinary sixteen year old girl. She is a math wiz and is kinda obsessed with serial killers. That is not so strange since she wants to be an FBI profiler. After she finds her older sister (Celeste) dead in the middle of her living room, she is determined to find the killer and have him/her locked up.

This book is the first murder mystery that I read in a very long time and I enjoyed reading it. When I first started reading, I thought I would have trouble with the book, because recently I have read another book with a sixteen year old girl being the main character and I couldn't quite identify with her because I'm a bit older myself. But with this book that totally didn't bother me, so that's a big plus.

So we have Autumn who is devastated by the murder of her sister. She is willing to do anything, even offering herself as bait, to catch the killer. I really liked Autumn's character. She kinda took the role of a misfit and feeling out of place, because her family did not know what to do with her and her genius mind. Only Celeste understood her and never found her strange. Instead she encouraged Autumn in all the things she did. So when Celeste isn't there anymore, Autumn felt really alone.

Fortunately, she has Edwardo, her cousin, who is also determined to beat the fucker up who killed Celeste. Edwardo always knows how to make Autumn feel better and is there for her when things get difficult. I just loved his character. Everyone should have a cousin like him :)

In the middle of the investigation and all there is of course also place for love. Caedon comes into picture and helps Autumn to get on her feet. He of all people knows very well what it is to lose someone and Autumn finds in him the person who understands her.

I really came to hate Autumn's parents and especially her mother. I don't know if I'm the only one who felt that way, but anyway she was really acting like a bitch towards Autumn instead of trying to be there for her. And yeah, I know she just lost a daughter, but still, that was no reason to ignore your other daughter..

I was really curious of the person who killed Celeste and his/her motive. So the person who ended up being the Celeste's killer was one of the persons I suspected to have killed her. The author did a great job at hiding that until the very end though, so thumbs up for that. The motive however, could have been stronger than what it was. While reading that part, I really felt like: 'Oh, was that it?'. But overall a nice read and well written (though a couple of spelling mistakes here and there).
