

Out on a Limb - Sexy young widow accused of the murder of her older, wealthy husband hooks up with a rogue cop to prove her innocence. (Romantic Suspense)

Out on a Limb

"You never loved my dad." Robin's stepson whacked another invisible golf ball, following the upward swing with such intensity Robin was surprised when he picked up the thread of his accusations. "You always loved his money. You know it and I know it."

No shouting, but each word felt like an explosion inside Robin's head. She pitched her voice to a near whisper. "There's no way you'll ever understand my feelings for your father."

It was such a cliché she almost laughed. Absently, she massaged below her left breast, inhaled, then made up her mind. Half a dozen steps took her, barefoot, to the row of Dolly Parton roses. They bordered her side of the creek. The scent of boiled honey hung in the humid air. The blooming decadence intoxicated Robin and a fragment of her life before becoming a murder suspect shook her with its clarity.

"You should go home, Jeb. Or--"

"Or you'll call the cops?" he taunted, staying next to his golf cart. "You don't want to be around me, Miz Lay me, why'd you come this close? Why didn't you go inside? You think you're untouchable? What if I say you harassed me?"

The rhythm of his breathing accelerated. Out of the corner of her eye, Robin watched four golf carts bypass the lagoon and head their way. She said, "Me harass you? Not even in your best wet dreams--and that's what really frosts you. I loved your father and you can't stand that I wanted him and not you."

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What sparked this book?

The Lacey-Peterson murder. Like many people, long before files were charged or a trial set, I assumed her husband was guilty. That assumption bothered me and I started asking questions:

- how does being a prime suspect change your life?
- how does the assumption of guilt affect the accused's family?
- what would you do if you thought the police were harassing you?
- what if your spouse's son gave false testimony against you?
- what if one cop thinks there's too much circumstantial evidence against you?
- what if there's a strong physical attraction to the cop?
- what if he goes out on a limb for you and loses his job and you're still the prime suspect?

I liked the idea of an accused widow being attracted to "the ugliest

man she'd ever met." He's nothing like her dead husband or her handsome stepson.

Frankly, I turned up the heat in this book, stretching myself to write hotter sex scenes between the heroine and hero. Underlying that decision was this thought: the heroine is young, alone, with an ailing mother. Sex with her husband was great. She misses physical intimacy. The hero is the only person besides her mother who believes in her innocence. Why wouldn't she want him? Why wouldn't she go out on a limb, too? What do you think about assuming people are guilty of crimes for which there is little or no hard evidence?

I hope you'll contact me about the excerpt and this story in general.