

KIRKUS REVIEWS

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DARK HORSE

A Syracuse attorney who's made a specialty of skating on thin ice feels the surface tremble beneath him when his partner is murdered.

Nicky Rigopoulos is every inch the modern politician. There's his gift for bringing people together, his call to public service and, of course, his extramarital affairs. Nicky's lovers have ranged from Carlotta Magnarella, the law partner who calls him "a Mediterranean Bill Clinton," to Lilly Longacre, the wife of the county Democratic Party chair who endorsed his candidacy for the New York Supreme Court. Nicky's trophy wife Scarlet doesn't mind, since she's busy with Randy DeVine, Nicky's competition for the bench. Even Sal Magnarella, Lottie's bar-owning brother, has long since forgiven his best buddy for dumping his sister. In fact, the only people who have a beef with Nicky are his clients, who watch in disbelief as he settles their million-dollar liability claims for pennies on the dollar. But that all changes when Lottie is beaten to death and the police decide Nicky killed her. As the pressure builds, Nicky's political dreams are seriously endangered. So are the women in his life. Even his own lawyer, lesbian Amazon Dana Dzikowski, can't keep her temper as Nicky slips deeper into trouble.

The efficient storytelling and snappy dialogue shine before the obligatory plot twists set in. And just when the tale seems snarled in complexities, first-timer Langan succeeds in pulling a lovely rabbit from his hat.

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