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Excerpt...

Immobilized by terror, Maya drew in a breath but was afraid to expel it. Her eyes traced upward, past the gloved hand on the trigger, but the face of the intruder was lost in the darkness. She lay between this spec-ter and David, now aware that the gun was trained not upon her but her husband.

No!

A scream stuck in her throat. Her heart pummeled the cage of her ribs. She tried not to stir, willed this apparition to go away, but something in her movement out of David's arms must have stirred him. David came awake, sat up on his elbows and saw the evil of this metallic threat.

She heard him roar, "What the—?" He reached across her body, batted at the gun barrel, pushing it away, shielding her. The blast rocked the room, sending shards of light stabbing through her brain. Maya squeezed her eyes shut but sickening images pulsed against her eyelids. The stench of powder hung in the air, the acrid taste of it burning her tongue.

David's body slumped over her, shud-dering and rasping. She felt the slick warmth of his blood. Pulling him close, she compressed her body into his to stanch the bleeding.

Two more shots rang out, followed by David's shuddering and Maya's gasps. She felt a searing pain in her hand and found herself gulping air. Her hands tingled with pain, like an electric shock.

David's body jerked and gurgled, con-vulsing in her arms, protecting her to the end. Death was rattling, writhing, tearing at him as he lay there thrashing. David gave up nothing easily. Choking down sobs, Maya lay beneath her husband, blocking the wound in his chest with her throbbing hand. The stench of blood was terrible.

(continued on back flap)

Sara Williams

ArcheBooks
Suspense

The Serenoa Scandal

The Serenoa Scandal by Sara Williams

ISBN
1-59507-
033-8

A prominent South Florida rancher is murdered in cold blood in his wife's arms. The DEA raids her beloved Serenoa Ranch and seizes her property. The harassing phone calls start—again. For Maya Menecal, her idyllic life is thrust into a horrifying nightmare.

Putnam Jorgenson, the editor of the local newspaper in the small town of Sabal Springs, Florida comes to the rescue, inviting his close friend and former DEA agent, John Spyers, from Maui, Hawaii to join him on a twisting and turning investigation into conspiracy, political corruption, and murder—all designed to conceal a deadly secret that could tear a community and an entire state apart.

This strongly character-driven page-turner is sure to delight all true Mystery-Suspense aficionados. Sara Williams' characters leap off the page and into your hearts. Her intricate story is woven from the threads of the true-crimes and scandals she investigated and reported as a journalist.

The Serenoa Scandal is a fascinating blend of murder and mayhem, of love and loss, and human drama played out against a backdrop that ranges from Florida's cattle ranches to the New York Commodities Exchange. Sara Williams is a gifted writer who writes smoothly, silkily against either back-ground. This is a book you don't want to put down and when you've finished the last page, you want more.

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Author of *Murder a la Carte*
The first in the Recipes for Murder Series

"A timely novel that says much about Florida politics, big money, and a land-scape that supports both sugar and cattle as well as intriguing characters who reflect a portion of Florida's diverse heritage."

Richard Fadem, Ph.D.
Professor of English, Emeritus

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(continued from front flap)

There was no way for the murderers to perceive that Maya herself was neither dead nor seriously wounded. She was ter-rorized but alive, choking down her own fear, praying for them to leave. But until they did, there was no way to help David. Maya willed him to hang on. She would not let him go, never. David was not dead. Not really, no. It simply could not be.

About the Author
Sara Williams



Photo by Anne Remington

Sara Williams, author of **The Don Juan Con**, is a former Gannett newspaper reporter and columnist whose stories have enjoyed fre-quent national syndication.

Ms. Williams and her husband Bill divide their time between the Flor-ida Gulf Coast and the San Juan Islands of Washington State.

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