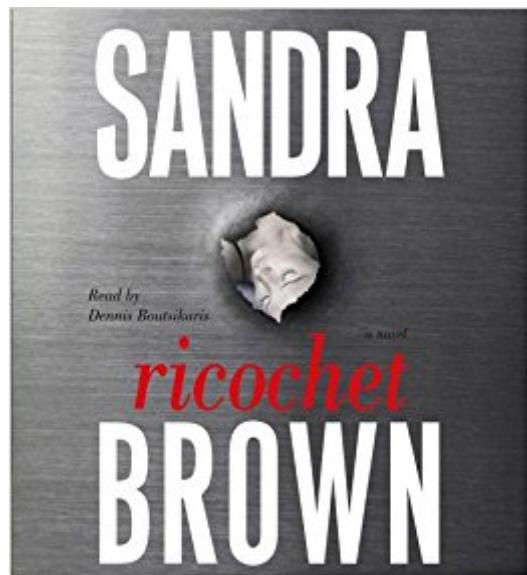


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# Ricochet: A Novel



## **Synopsis**

New York Times bestselling author Sandra Brown is back with a spine-tingling story of murder and betrayal -- and a homicide detective's struggle with his own rules of conduct. When Detective Sergeant Duncan Hatcher is summoned to the home of Judge Cato Laird in the middle of the night to investigate a fatal shooting, he knows that discretion and kid-glove treatment are the key to staying in the judge's good graces and keeping his job. At first glance, the case appears open-and-shut: Elise, the judge's trophy wife, interrupted a burglary in progress and killed the intruder in self-defense. But Duncan is immediately suspicious of Elise's innocent act. And further investigation quickly puts Duncan's career in jeopardy -- because he can't deny his increasing attraction to Elisa Laird, even if she is a married woman, a proven liar, and a murder suspect. Ricochet's plot twists -- as only Sandra Brown can write them -- make this a gripping thriller, in which a decent cop's worst enemy may be his own conscience...and trusting the wrong person could mean the difference between life and death.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Starred Review. A sultry noir in contemporary clothes, this tight new thriller from Brown plays like measured chaos. The plot is twisting, the characters are well shaded, and Brown manipulates each string with a skilled hand, creating a story that will keep listeners puzzled and rapt. Narrator Boutsikaris is a perfect complement to the material. He lends the characters just enough twang to betray their Southern heritage but not so much as to make protagonist Duncan Hatcher seem anything less than a shrewd and hard-edged detective. And for Elise, the gorgeous but married

damsel in distress who ties Duncan's libido and loyalties into knots, Boutsikaris employs a lilting tone that simultaneously suggests sweetness, sin and mystery. Did Elise's husband, a distinguished judge, hire someone to kill her, or is she involved in a plot with a drug dealer? Is Duncan making a mistake mistrusting Elise, or is his wariness the one thing that will save him? With Brown's skill for creating rich, layered characters and Boutsikaris's talent for embodying them, this audio doesn't disappoint. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Detective Duncan Hatcher has no reason to like Cato Laird, the judge who let Robert Savich, a Savannah crime lord, slip through the cracks by declaring a mistrial over a juror conflict. But Duncan is all business when he and his partner DeeDee Bowen are called to Laird's house one night to find Laird's beautiful wife, Elise, has fatally shot an intruder. Duncan and DeeDee are immediately suspicious of Elise, who managed to kill the man, Gary Ray Trotter, with a single, precise shot. Elise denies knowing Trotter, but Duncan isn't comfortable dismissing the case as self-defense. When Elise comes to him with the seemingly preposterous assertion that her adoring husband actually wants her dead, Duncan is more suspicious of her, even as his attraction to her grows. He continues to pursue the investigation, despite the fact that Cato himself clearly considers the case closed. But when Elise's car is discovered on a bridge with a dead man in it and no sign of Elise herself, Duncan realizes he may have misjudged Elise and fears it might be too late to help her. Gripping and absorbing, this is Brown's best thriller in years and a must-read for her many devotees. Kristine HuntleyCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I have been a moderate fan of Sandra Brown for a long time. She writes romance novels, which are always fairly predictable, but she uses imaginative plots which are usually lacking in this genre. It has been a few years since I last read a book of hers, and either my tastes have changed or her writing has taken a downward turn, but I didn't find this novel as entertaining as I remember from the past. Of course one knows from the beginning which boy will get which girl; that is to be expected. But I found this plot to be unrealistic and overall I was disappointed.

Bristling with Brown's trademark suspense, *Ricochet* stars upstanding police detective Duncan Hatcher, frustrated with his inability to nail criminal extraordinaire, Robert Savich. Savich has recently gone free despite being guilty of murder, courtesy of smooth, handsome judge Cato Laird calling a mistrial. Before he knows who she is, Duncan finds himself attracted to Judge Laird's

beautiful wife, Elise. When she is involved in a fatal shooting at their posh residence, Duncan knows she's hiding at least part of the truth. There is evidence to suggest the situation was more than a break-in and shooting in self defense, and Duncan and his partner Dee Dee are reluctant to close the case too quickly. Duncan finds himself violating his personal code of ethics when Elise Laird secretly approaches him with a story about her life being in danger. He doesn't believe a word of what she says, but he still finds himself irresistibly drawn to her. Evidence is piling up against her, and then Elise disappears at the same time another body shows up. Since Sandra Brown writes romantic suspense, I knew there had to be more to Elise than met the eye. There are a number of red herrings along the way, as well as a great deal of intrigue to help keep me turning the pages. Brown likes to write about characters in seemingly impossible situations, combined with a lack of trust bordering on dislike that makes romance seem unlikely, yet through the unraveling of intrigue, they work through all their issues and manage a happily ever after. She does that in this book with a great deal of skill, creating characters with depth for this first-class mystery. The villains are chillingly evil, and the odds against the good guys seem impossible. This is excellent romantic suspense.

RICOCHET, a Sandra Brown novel, takes place in the city of Savannah and centers around homicide Detective Duncan Hatcher, a tough-minded and ruggedly handsome cop. His partner, Dee Dee Bowen, often misjudged as a lesbian, is a smart strongly opinionated and dedicated detective whose primary job is to cover Hatcher's six. Superior Court Judge Cato Laird sets killer Robert Savich free on a minor jury technicality. This infuriates Duncan Hatcher who has spent months building a case against Savich for a grisly murder. Hatcher and Dee Dee are later called to the home of Judge Laird to investigate the killing of an apparent burglar by the judge's young, beautiful and seductive trophy wife, Elise. A series of moral and ethical missteps follow involving Hatcher and the judge's wife that could compromise the murder investigation. Dee Dee goes ballistic and threatens to sever their partnership. Brown does a good job of developing Dee Dee and Hatcher's characters. She is not so good with the others. There are times when the story falls flat, but in general it keeps the reader involved and turning pages. I enjoyed the book. I would like to see the main characters—the detectives—in a follow-on novel. You'll like the ending although it's a bit over the top. I rate Ricochet a 4 on a 5 scale.

The police have been trying for years to get enough evidence to convict career criminal Savich. Just

when everything seems ready to go to trial, Judge Laird lets Savich off on a technicality. Duncan Hatcher has spent years trying to get a conviction, but his emotional outburst in the courtroom only gets him a couple of nights in jail for contempt of court. Everything gets even more complicated when Duncan meets the beautiful Elise, Judge Laird's wife. There are instant sparks between them, even when Duncan and his partner Dee Dee are called to the judge's house after Elise has shot and killed a home invader. Elise arranges a secret meeting with Duncan to tell him that her husband is trying to kill her. Can Duncan believe her, or is she setting him up? Once again Sandra Brown tells a riveting story with flawed, but fascinating characters, well worth the time to read and savour.

Once I got into the book, I could hardly put it down. This is one of the best books I have read in awhile. It was so well written, that I could easily picture in my mind what was happening. The characters were all wonderfully written. Elise was especially memorable. Duncan, too.

Books are very personal, in terms of rating, unlike items you can rate works good, etc.. I found the read to be interesting, head scratching who dunnit! I live in GA., so it also adds a home state pull, because it takes place in Savannah, GA.. I found the characters & story very believable, well thought out, & grammar down to earth, not salty. It left me wanting to read on till the end, which is always a good sign, in my book.

This was my first time reading a book by Sandra Brown and I don't think I will be reading another anytime soon. The storyline was mediocre and the characters are one dimensional. The book is wayyy over priced and must be based on the authors' name alone which I think is outrageous and totally disrespectful to first time readers of her work and her die hard fans. The first 52% of this book was so boring that I almost stopped reading but pressed on hoping it would get better. Quite honestly it did pick up a little after this point but the storyline was still trite and ordinary. Duncan's obsession with the suspect felt "over the top." I assume he is very attractive but since he wasn't adequately described I can't say to what extent. Drooling over the "hero" is half the fun. Yes, sex scenes are referenced but sadly there are no evocative or titillating details. If there had been it may have helped. On 2nd thought I doubt it. Save you money!

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