

JANET



EVANOVITCH

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER

It takes balls to
be a bounty hunter
and Stephanie Plum
doesn't care
whose



SEVEN UP

Seven Up

Janet Evanovich

headline

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'Janet Evanovich's characters are eccentric and exaggerated, the violence often surreal and the plot dizzily speedy: but she produces as many laughs as anyone writing crime today'

The Times

'Crime writing at its funniest . . . classic black comedy'

Big Issue

'Evanovich's series of New Jersey comedy thrillers are among the great joys of contemporary crime fiction . . . all the easy class and wit that you expect to find in the best American TV comedy, but too rarely find in modern fiction'

GQ

'Stephanie Plum in ass-kicking form . . . utterly delightful'

Cosmopolitan

'The pace never flags, the humour is grandly surreal, and the dialogue fairly sizzles off the page'

Irish Times

Also by Janet Evanovich

One For The Money

Two For The Dough

Three To Get Deadly

Four To Score

High Five

Hot Six

Acknowledgements

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for suggesting the title for this book.**

Fleeced

Georgina Wroe

Dominic Peach isn't your usual sort of environmental campaigner. The only environment he cares about is one that doesn't include his girlfriend. Thus far the job at Save Our Species has suited him quite nicely, especially since he rigged the database to make sheep (surely the planet's least endangered mammal?) his only responsibility. So when he's ordered to the former Soviet Republic of Belugastan on a high-profile mission to protect the *Beluga argali argali*, a rare wild sheep, it's a bit of a shock.

Particularly as it turns out that Belugastan's head of state, ex-gangster Tim the First, has invented the *Beluga argali argali* as a lure to cash-rich game hunters, props courtesy of his friend Erik's motorbike and his mum's sheepskin coat. And when the hunters include a mad Texan millionairess and her gun-crazy sons Hubba and Bubba, Dominic discovers chasing wild sheep can be an extremely hairy business . . .

Praise for Georgina Wroe's previous novel, SLAPHEAD

'If Kathy Lette had been born in Omsk, this is the book she'd write' *Mirror*

'Compulsive . . . crammed with action and wise-cracks and eminently readable' *Big Issue*

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headline

Lifeline

John Francome

'Francome provides a vivid panorama of the racing world'
The Times

Unlike some of his fellow jockeys, Tony Byrne has never taken a bung and never ridden a dishonest race. All the same, his career is heading for the rocks, dragged down by weight problems and woman trouble – and too many slow horses.

In comparison, star rider Freddy Montague has never been fussy about sticking to the rules, either on the racetrack or in bed with another man's wife. And if there's money on offer to fix races, Freddy's guaranteed to be first on the gravy train.

Unfortunately for both men, the guarantees run out once Freddy's train comes off the rails. That's when the gravy turns to blood . . .

Ex-National Hunt Champion Jockey John Francome is a broadcaster on racing for Channel 4, and has established himself as one of the front runners in the racing thriller stakes. Don't miss his previous bestsellers from *Headline*:

'Francome brings authenticity to tales of the horse-racing circuit and, like Dick Francis, goes beyond the thunder of the turf to the skulduggery of the trading ring' *Mail on Sunday*

'The racing feel is authentic and it's a pacy, entertaining read'
Evening Standard

'Thrills to the final furlong . . . Francome knows how to write a good racing thriller' *Daily Express*

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headline

The Lamorna Wink

Martha Grimes

As Melrose Plant sits in a Cornish tearoom, he is served by remarkable young Johnny Wells – waiter, cab-driver and amateur magician. Melrose is attempting to escape his Long Piddleton lethargy by renting Seabourne house, positioned high on a promontory overlooking the sea. It looks like the set of a 40s or 50s romantic film, but Melrose is unprepared for the onslaught of memories it triggers. And in examining his own past, he is caught up in the tragic past of its owners, the Bletchley family.

With Richard Jury sent on a fool's errand to Northern Ireland, Melrose turns to Brian Macalvie of the Devon and Cornwall police for help when Johnny's aunt disappears. Macalvie is conducting his own investigation into the murder of a woman on a footpath near Lamorna Cove, and in Lamorna's single pub, the 'Wink', he reveals to Melrose a side of himself he'd rather stay buried up in Scotland.

Each of their pasts – Macalvie's, Plant's and the Bletchleys' – converge at the end when Richard Jury comes to help set things to rights. *THE LAMORNA WINK* once again confirms Martha Grimes as 'one of the masters of the genre' (*Newsweek*).

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Prologue

For the better part of my childhood, my professional aspirations were simple – I wanted to be an intergalactic princess. I didn't care much about ruling hordes of space people. Mostly I wanted to wear the cape and the sexy boots and carry a cool weapon.

As it happens, the princess thing didn't work out for me, so I went to college and when I graduated I went to work as a lingerie buyer for a chain store. Then *that* didn't work out, so I blackmailed my bail bondsman cousin into giving me a job as a bounty hunter. Funny how fate steps in. I never did get the cape or the sexy boots, but I *do* finally have a sort of cool weapon. Well

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okay, it's a little .38 and I keep it in my cookie jar, but it's still a weapon, right?

Back in the days when I was auditioning for princess I had the occasional run-in with the bad kid in the neighborhood. He was two years older than me. His name was Joe Morelli. And he was trouble.

I'm still having those run-ins with Morelli. And he's still trouble . . . but now he's the kind of trouble a woman likes. He's a cop and his gun is bigger than mine and he doesn't keep it in a cookie jar.

He proposed to me a couple weeks ago during a libido attack. He unsnapped my jeans, hooked a finger into the waistband, and pulled me to him. 'About that proposal, cupcake . . .' he said.

'Which proposal are we talking about?'

'The marriage proposal.'

'Are you serious?'

'I'm a desperate man.'

That was obvious.

Truth is, I was desperate, too. I was starting to have romantic thoughts about my electric toothbrush. Problem was, I just didn't know if I was ready for *marriage*. Marriage is scary stuff. You have to share a bathroom. What's with that? And what about fantasies? Suppose the intergalactic princess resurfaces and I need to set off on a mission?

Morelli shook his head. 'You're thinking again.'

'There's a lot to consider.'

'Let me hit the high points for you . . . wedding cake, oral sex, plus you can have my credit card.'

'I like the wedding cake part.'

'You like the other parts, too,' Morelli said.

'I need time to think.'

'Sure,' Morelli said, 'take all the time you need. How about thinking upstairs in the bedroom?'

His finger was still hooked into my jeans and it was getting warm down there. I inadvertently glanced at the stairs.

Morelli grinned and pulled me closer. 'Thinking about the wedding cake?'

'No,' I said. 'And I'm not thinking about the credit card, either.'

Chapter One

I knew something bad was going to happen when Vinnie called me into his private office. Vinnie is my boss and my cousin. I read on a bathroom stall door once that Vinnie humps like a ferret. I'm not sure what that means, but it seems reasonable since Vinnie *looks* like a ferret. His ruby pinky ring reminded me of treasures found in Seaside Park arcade claw-machines. He was wearing a black shirt and black tie, his receding black hair was slicked back, casino pit boss-style. His facial expression was tuned to *not happy*.

I looked across the desk at him and tried not to grimace. 'Now what?'

‘I got a job for you,’ Vinnie said. ‘I want you to find that ratfink Eddie DeChooch, and I want you to drag his bony ass back here. He got tagged smuggling a truckload of bootleg cigarettes up from Virginia and he missed his court date.’

I rolled my eyes so far into the top of my head I could see hair growing. ‘I’m not going after Eddie DeChooch. He’s old, and he kills people, and he’s dating my grandmother.’

‘He hardly ever kills people anymore,’ Vinnie said. ‘He has cataracts. Last time he tried to shoot someone he emptied a clip into an ironing board.’

Vinnie owns and operates Vincent Plum Bail Bonds in Trenton, New Jersey. When someone is accused of a crime, Vinnie gives the court a cash bond, the court releases the accused until trial, and Vinnie hopes to God the accused shows up for court. If the accused decides to forgo the pleasure of his court date, Vinnie is out a lot of money unless I can find the accused and bring him back into the system. My name is Stephanie Plum and I’m a bond enforcement officer . . . AKA bounty hunter. I took the job when times were lean and not even the fact that I graduated in the top ninety-eight percent of my college class could get me a better position. The economy has since improved, and there’s no good reason why I’m still tracking down bad guys, except that it annoys my mother and I don’t have to wear pantyhose to work.

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‘I’d give this to Ranger, but he’s out of the country,’ Vinnie said. ‘So that leaves you.’

Ranger is a soldier-of-fortune kind of guy who sometimes works as a bounty hunter. He’s very good . . . at everything. And he’s scary as hell. ‘What’s Ranger doing out of the country? And what do you mean by out of the country? Asia? South America? Miami?’

‘He’s making a pickup for me in Puerto Rico.’ Vinnie shoved a file folder across his desk. ‘Here’s the bond agreement on DeChooch and your authorization to capture. He’s worth fifty thousand to me – five thousand to you. Go over to DeChooch’s house and find out why he pulled a no-show on his hearing yesterday. Connie called and there was no answer. Christ, he could be dead on his kitchen floor. Going out with your grandma’s enough to kill anyone.’

Vinnie’s office is on Hamilton, which at first glance might not seem like the best location for a bail bonds office. Most bail bonds offices are across from the jail. The difference with Vinnie is that many of the people he bonds out are either relatives or neighbors and live just off Hamilton in the Burg. I grew up in the Burg and my parents still live there. It’s really a very safe neighborhood as Burg criminals are always careful to do their crimes elsewhere. Well, okay, Jimmy Curtains once walked Two Toes Garibaldi out of his house in his pajamas and drove him to the landfill, but still, the actual