

# Blame

Even lawyers who deal with the devil have to pay the price



Hot shot defense lawyer Tristan Elliot's latest stunning victory is in successfully defending Joshua Ballentine, sickeningly handsome brash young son of a local wealthy businessman on charges of a particularly brutal rape and battery.

Tristan's contentious victory does not bode well with his estranged wife Kelly who has returned to his home town at the tail end of the trial so she and her husband can begin the sticky process of a last ditch attempt at saving their crumbling marriage.

Putting her ethical issues aside Kelly accompanies Tristan to the Ballentine family's isolated luxury hunting lodge just outside the mountain town of Blame so they can begin their own negotiations.

However their aloneness and peace is short lived when the newly exonerated Joshua arrives dismantling their solitude with the subtlety of a sledgehammer. Tristan's sense of duty soon goes out the window and his irritation turns to a more primal sense of dread when the ever repugnant and morally defunct Joshua takes a worrying avid interest in his beautiful wife.

And after calming down from her initial outrage at the sudden invasion Kelly's misgivings and concerns about Joshua seem to dissipate and she finds herself simultaneously repulsed and attracted by him.



Increasingly frustrated by his wife's interest in Joshua's youth, good looks and erratic edge, life at the lodge becomes claustrophobic as a coffin for Tristan and he and Kelly fall into their old poisonous habits of spiteful little mind games; she interrupting his business calls, he killing a deer in front of her when he knows what an ardent animal lover she is, she making him look weak and ridiculous in front of Joshua by suggesting he come rafting with them when she knows he has a morbid fear of water after a near drowning as a child.

But it is Kelly who pushes Tristan's tolerance to breaking point by using the dark electricity that's been building between her and Joshua - flirting with him and wearing dresses that he's commented on how much he likes.

Twisted up in knots inside, Tristan pulls an unwise counterattack by suggesting they go to the small mountain town below the lodge for a night's socialising.

Kelly's mild curiosity as to why visiting the simple little town is such a huge thrill-seeking ride for Joshua is answered with the sickening realisation that she's been brought to Blame - home town of the victim of physical rape by Joshua and legal rape by Tristan.

As a drunken and ever more unhinged Joshua spouts insults at the mild mannered patrons of the restaurant they are in Kelly and Tristan reawaken themselves to his true nature with progressive dread.

But insight and a grasp on reality have come too late as it becomes apparent that the understandably enraged locals have picked up on who their repugnant brash visitor and his male companion are. Back at the lodge it isn't long before a group of men, including the victim's family, lay siege on them seeking the justice Tristan ensured they were denied.

