



The Grassy Knoll (Columbo)

By William Harrington

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When an arrogant, controversial talk-show host is murdered just before airing a show to expose Kennedy's real killers, Columbo cannot solve the case without also asking--who killed JFK? 40,000 first printing.

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The Grassy Knoll (Columbo) By William Harrington Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

By closely following the formula of the winning TV series, this first Columbo book in hardcover is itself a winner. As in the series, the puzzle here is less about who commits the crime than how Columbo solves it. Powerful TV talk-show host Paul Drury is murdered by his ex-wife and her besotted lover, the show's producer. LAPD's Lt. Columbo gets the case and before long we're involved with TV business hustlers, Vegas mobsters, rich right-wing crazies, colorful supporting players and secrets involving sex, gambling and JFK's assassination. At the center, as slyly polite as ever, is the rumpled detective, with his raincoat and cigars, the old jalopy he loves, the offstage wife and family--and of course, the trademark phrase: "just one little thing. . . ." Even though the murderous ex-wife warns her accomplices that Columbo is "not as dumb as he looks. Not as dumb as he acts," they don't believe her until it's too late. Harrington (*For the Defense*) gets every note right and readers will find the action, including the assassination scenes, as vivid as anything on the tube--and without commercials. Readers will clamor for sequels.

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From [Booklist](#)

Mystery novelist Harrington certainly isn't lacking in gimmickry in his latest offering: take a high-profile media star's murder, have it investigated by none other than LAPD's Lieutenant Columbo (of TV fame), and have the trail of death lead 30 years back in time to that age-old question, "Who shot JFK?" Controversial talk-show host Paul Drury's violent demise is the catalyst for these proceedings, and the facts that are going to be revealed on his upcoming program on the Kennedy assassination are the motivation for murder. Columbo bumbles through the mess in classic fashion, Harrington effectively capturing the annoyingly persistent cop's Peter Falk-inspired inflections and mannerisms. Strictly a commercial venture, this one, but Columbo fans and JFK assassination buffs will get a kick out of it. *Martin Brady*

From Kirkus Reviews

A print debut for Colombo, the perpetually rumpled TV detective, who, here, catches a clutch of murderers and clears up the mysteries of John Kennedy's assassination. Harrington is also the author of *Virus* (1991), among many others. What starts out as a reasonably slick L.A. police thriller with the murder of a thoroughly believable TV talk show host, is suddenly jarred by the appearance of a long-since-canceled TV police detective, Lt. Columbo. The murder victim is Paul Drury, a typically intense and abrasive small-screen tyrant whose popularity is largely based on his intense interest in the loose ends that keep the Lee Harvey Oswald case unsettled. We know who killed Drury right off. It's his ex-wife Alicia, a good-looking blond still on his program staff. What we don't know is why. Why is answered by Lt. Columbo, who still has the French sedan, battered cigar, and rumpled raincoat that distinguished him from Rock Hudson and Dennis Weaver on Sunday nights years ago and who still closes every investigatory interview with a cute, niggling, little, last-minute question that is always of critical importance. Those cute questions quickly lead him to dispose of the fake alibis and red herrings scattered by Alicia and her wealthy boyfriend and co- conspirator Tim Bell. While Columbo busies himself following a string of clues that take him to Las Vegas and the penthouse suite of an old-line, New York mafia capo, Tim and Alicia fret and stew about the location of the late Paul Drury's safe-deposit box. Columbo, without a bit of trouble, turns up gigabytes of computer evidence that bring him to a conclusion right on schedule. His only real problem seems to be qualifying with his police pistol. The appearance of the intensely familiar character, complete with accurate speech patterns, throws a blanket on the proceedings for all but the most devoted Falk fans. Who wants to read with the TV blasting in your ear? - *Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Herman Nelson:

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Alan Johnson:

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