

The First Two Pages

The purpose of this blog is for me to analyze the first two pages of a previous book—and I chose an earlier book in the Rocky Bluff P.D. series: *Murder in the Worst Degree*.

I chose it because it has one of my best first lines:

Except for the dead body washed up on the sand, conditions were perfect for surfing

What follows next gives a peek into the setting:

Thanks to a big storm coming from Alaska, spectacular waves rolled in. They rose in dark blue-gray splendor with a magnificent header of sparkling foam before they crashed and rolled toward shore. Another set of perfect waves formed right behind.

Next is the introduction to the ones who found the body:

Two young males garbed in black wet suits stood a few feet away from the corpse. Two colorful surfboards stood in the sand. Towels and personal items lay nearby.

Officer Gordon Butler is one of the ongoing characters in this series, and the reader is told why he's out there and bit more of the setting.

Officer Gordon Butler from the Rocky Bluff P.D. had been patrolling along the beach front because of the unusual high surf. He was the first to respond to the dispatcher's call of a body on the beach.

Gordon parked his blue-and-white patrol car on the broken asphalt of the parking area near the condemned pier. The only other car around was an old station wagon with the back window open. Gordon left his car and trudged through the sand—not easy in shoes.

As the story moves on, a bit of humor is introduced:

One of the young surfers ran up to Gordon. “Oh, man, thank God you're here. This is so gross. I was surfing and this body was in the wave with me. At first, I thought it was a pile of rags. We came ashore at the same time.” His shuddered, pulled off his hood and shook out his long blonde hair.

“Did anyone touch the body?”

“Are you kidding? It's yucky.”

There is a bit of police work and some clues as to the identity of the corpse in the next paragraphs:

“Good.” Once Gordon was close enough to see the corpse, there was no need to make sure the person was dead. Wrapped in seaweed and what appeared to be the remnants of sodden and torn clothing, the body appeared to be that of an elderly male.

Using his portable radio, Gordon made a call to the station, reporting his location and his find. He requested the detectives and the coroner be sent to the scene.

“Why the detectives?” the dispatcher asked.

“I’ve got a pretty good idea about the identity of the corpse. I doubt seriously he drowned while swimming.”

As he waited for the detectives, Gordon took down the surfers’ names and phone numbers. Both had the same story. They’d come to this seldom used beach to take advantage of the big waves where no one was around to interfere or chase them off.

While interviewing the two witnesses, Gordon learns more about them that he’ll pass on to the detectives:

The shorter of the two surfers who identified himself as Joey said, “Dude, this is kind of cool. Never saw a dead body before.”

“When do you think we can go back in the water?” Brandon, the blonde, flipped his long wet hair. “Surf like this doesn’t come around here often.”

“Once the detectives talk to you and the body is removed you’re on your own.”

“How long is that going to take?” Brandon stared at the huge waves.

“A half hour or so.” Gordon hoped he was right.

Next is the introduction of two major characters, the ones who will be charged with solving the murder. The last sentence brings up another problem—one to do with the department itself—a new police chief who is female:

Within minutes, Detective Doug Milligan and the newly-appointed Detective Felix Zachary drove up in an unmarked sedan. Milligan’s longtime partner, Frank Marshall, left soon after Chief McKinsey’s retirement. Some said Marshall did it because of the new chief and her ideas about how the department should be run.

Enough information has been given to pique the curiosity of someone reading these first two pages. Key characters have been introduced as well as another problem besides the dead body.

Link to Purchase Murder in the Worst Degree:

http://www.amazon.com/Murder-Worst-Degree-Rocky-Bluff-ebook/dp/B00JFKAH9A/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1452613871&sr=8-1&keywords=Murder+in+the+Worst+Degree+by+F.+M.+Meredith

Marilyn aka F. M. Meredith

This is the latest in the series:

A Crushing Death

A pile of rocks is found on a dead body beneath the condemned pier, a teacher is accused of molesting a student, the new police chief is threatened by someone she once arrested for violent attacks on women, and Officer Milligan's teenage daughter has problem.



F. M. Meredith who is also known as Marilyn Meredith is nearing the number of 40 published books. Besides being an author she is a wife, mother, grandma and great-grandmother. Though the Rocky Bluff she writes about is fictional, she lived for over twenty-years in a similar small beach town. Besides having many law enforcement officers in her family she counts many as friends. She teaches writing, loves to give presentations to writing and other groups, and is a member of Mystery Writers of America, three chapters of Sisters in Crime and on the board of Public Safety

Writers Association.

Website: <http://fictionforyou.com>

Blog: <http://marilynmeredith.blogspot.com>

Amazon:

http://www.amazon.com/Crushing-Death-Rocky-Bluff-P-D/dp/1610092260/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1457618775&sr=8-1&keywords=A+Crushing+Death+by+F.M.+Meredith

Facebook: Marilyn Meredith

Twitter: MarilynMeredith

Contest: Once again, the person who comments on the most blogs during this tour, can have a character named after them in the next Rocky Bluff P.D. mystery. Tomorrow you can find me here:

<http://www.maggieking.com/>