



Off the Edge

Carolyn Crane

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She may be his worse enemy...

For deadly secret agent Peter Macmillan, language is a weapon-one he uses to hunt criminals, destroy plots, and charm enemies. Seducing information out of a beautiful singer in a Bangkok hotel should be easy...except this particular singer has the power to destroy his cool facade, and with it, his last defense against a dark past.

He may be her only hope...

He tricked her. He helped himself to her body and her secrets. He has enemies everywhere. Laney Lancaster should hate Peter, but when she discovers him shirtless, sweaty, and chained up in the hotel's dungeon, all she can think about is freeing him. Because she knows what it's like to be trapped and alone. And she could use a dangerous friend. They may be wrong for each other, but the instant they join forces, Laney and Peter are plunged into an odyssey of hot sex and dark danger. To survive, they must trust each other with their lives-and their hearts.

Off the Edge Details

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From Reader Review Off the Edge for online ebook

Dabney says

this review was originally published at All About Romance

Romantic suspense is one of the most "difficult to do well" sub genres in romance. If the romance works the suspense is often weak. If the suspense is fabulous, the romance is often unbelievable.

But those of us who like romantic suspense got lucky in 2013. Carolyn Crane published two books in her *The Associates* series. The first of these, **Against the Dark**, is a very good book. The second, **Off the Edge**, is even better.

Peter McMillan was, in an earlier life, a brilliant scholar of linguistics. His life was shattered ten years ago when a bomb on a train blew up everyone he loved. Now he's a covert agent who works for the Association, a ruthless, shadowy, vigilante organization dedicated to, as its leader Dax says, "keeping the balance of power intact. Keeping World War III from happening. And stopping the most despicable crimes." Peter, in addition to being a stone cold killer, is a hunter. And his choice of weapon is language.

Nobody escaped Macmillan. Back when he had been a rising star in the linguistics world, he could spend entire months studying the way different people pronounced a diphthong like the ow in low, and draw all kinds of conclusions about what that meant. He could see a universe in a single word choice. He used his expertise to understand people, and by extension, humanity itself.

Peter is in Bangkok, along with representatives from every evil corner of the world. They've all gathered because a weapon, a weapon which will give its owner the ability to rule the world, is being put up for auction by the criminal Jazzman. The Associates are there to make sure the good guys get the weapon. The problem is no one knows who Jazzman is. Peter, however, has studied everything the Association has on Jazzman, and will be able to identify him if he can hear him speak.

Jazzman is indeed coming to Bangkok to auction off the weapon, the TZ – 5. He is also coming to capture his ex-wife, a woman who turned him over to the law and then ran. This woman, Laney Lancaster, has been hiding out in Bangkok for the past two years, living in the Bangkok Imperiale Hotel Des Roses, owned by a family of Thai criminals, where she thinks she is safe. Laney too loves words; she's a singer songwriter who performs nightly at the hotel. Unfortunately for Laney Jazzman has chosen the Hotel Des Roses as the place to hold his iniquitous auction.

Peter is drawn to Laney from the moment he hears her sing. That's not why he seduces her, however. He beds her in order to steal her recording of the night's show from her laptop. He thinks there's a good chance that if he listens to all the voices of those watching her show – almost all of whom are there for the TZ – 5 auction – he'll be able to figure out who Jazzman is.

Ms. Crane takes this very suspenseful set up and imbues it with enough adrenaline to keep readers eagerly and anxiously flipping the pages. Within a few chapters, seemingly everyone is after Laney and Peter as they wend their way through the back alleys of Bangkok. It seems impossible Laney will be able to escape her heinous troll of a husband, the Associates will be able to get their hands on the TZ–5, or Peter will survive to live another day let alone find a way to live happily ever after. Just as in the *Ice* series, it's unclear whom Laney can trust and whom Peter can rely on. The two are forced to work together in order to survive and together they make a damn good team and a surpassingly sexy couple.

There are so many great things about this book. The plot is excellent, the suspense riveting, the location palpable, the secondary characters stark and interesting, and the writing brilliant. Peter and Laney have incredible chemistry, physical and verbal. The conversations are full of wit, sex, and smarts.

Take this scene where Laney is trying to rescue Peter who is trying to convince her to save herself instead.

She paused only a moment. "I get it." She began to unbend a paperclip. "You don't want me in danger or something, so you're being jerky. Chivalry noted and rejected."

"Is that what I'm doing?"

"I think it is."

She felt his eyes on her.

“And this is the expert assessment from the woman who thinks a cornpone hee-haw singing show is a capital way to hide?”

His words were a punch in the gut.

She tried not to show it. “Excuse me?”

“Cornpone hee-haw singing show,” he repeated. “It’s rather precise, don’t you think? Hardly needs a supporting cast.”

“I know what you’re doing,” she said.

“You don’t know the first thing about me.”

“I know you think words are your bitch. Just some shell game for you to play. Making things real that aren’t, or putting a new face on things you don’t like. But guess what?” She fixed him with a good glare. They were close enough to kiss, but that wasn’t in the air now. “When a man is chained up in a cage like a circus tiger, then it’s the right thing to help him. And doing the right thing is always the right thing. And I’ll tell you something else: when a dog gets run over by a car, it’s a goddamn tragedy, not an exercise in phonemes. So take the fucking paperclip and unlock yourself.”

He laughed that beautiful laugh.

You think it’s funny?”

Oh it’s not funny so much as delicious,” he said. “I see you read my book.”

“That’s right. A whole lot of bunk designed to hornswoggle folks.”

*“What a coincidence,” he said. “That’s what I was planning on calling my next book. A **Whole Lot of Bunk Designed to Hornswoggle Folks Two**. What do you think?”*

I love this book. It’s nearly flawless. It gets an A from me.

? Irena ? says

3.5

You need to suspend your disbelief to fully enjoy this story. Otherwise the ridiculousness of certain parts would be too much. A wounded, recently tortured person can hardly think of sex or carry someone of their back. The timing of sexual scenes is embarrassingly off.

However, I liked Laney and her autobiographical songs. She is more believable and likeable than the heroine from the first book. Also, Macmillan's area of expertise is original enough to make me really like this story and the introduction of the next main character is well incorporated into the storyline. I can't say that the way the Associates operate is a new thing (you've seen it in a lot of films featuring the CIA) but it doesn't make it any less interesting.

I liked it.

Saly says

So the first book pulled me in so much that I immediately jumped to this one and I must say I loved this. The heroine is a battered wife on the run and the hero is a man who dissects words, speech, his connection with emotions tenuous ever since he lost his family. He sees the heroine and through her songs immediately grasps her whole story but he needs her for access and has no compunction in using her. I must admit though there were many contrived things in the book I just enjoyed the way it was written despite the fact that the heroine really had too many TSTL (too stupid to live moments). I cannot wait for the next book though I am not sure I will enjoy a secret baby storyline but so far I am placing my faith in this author.

Leea says

Laney grinned. “Zero stars. And that’s final.” He watched her. He couldn’t believe the miracle of her, or how beautiful and brave she was. But that wasn’t the phrase, not precisely. She felt good and endless, and he wanted to never stop discovering her.

This is the second book in Carolyn Crane Associates Series, a fast paced series set around a group of spies with brains called the Associates. Although this is a series, Off the Edge could be read as a stand alone. The world is outlined in each book but i've enjoyed reading this series from the beginning. Off the Edge just feels more polished and developed or maybe it's just that I fell so hard for this story and once Macmillan and his white shirt graced the page, I was simply lost.

I wish I could find the right words to describe how much I enjoyed every aspect of this book. But wow, I just loved this book. In many ways it reminded me of my favorite suspense series, Suzanne Brockmann, Troubleshooter series but without all the side stories. First off I should say i'm not a huge suspense fan so i'm not an expert on how they should be done and for me Off the Edge moved past being put in a box with its moving story, descriptive nuances and characters you could connect with.

Something happens the moment that Peter "Maxwell" Macmillan sees Laney singing on stage. The songs she wrote from the heart seem to float over everyone else but they're a bullseye for Peter. He's lost in her descriptions and in that moment he must know more about Laney.

Maxwell listened. He saw her. He soaked her in, seemed almost to enjoy her, with a kind of sparkle in his eye that seemed just for her. It made her feel happy, bold. And it was mercilessly sexy.

Then theres Macmillan... Peter the man he once was is drawn so desperately to Laney that he torn like never before between his mission with the Association and his desire to be near Laney. You see he's a linguistic specialist with brawn in fact Laney described Maxwell as an academic Indiana Jones and I loved that!

“A linguist secret agent. Did you grow up thinking, I want to be so goddamn cool someday?”

The mission of finding this super weapon was fun and it intrigued me. There was a lot of running, guns and fighting and I thought that was written very realistic. I found myself at the edge of my seat many times as Macmillan was in danger and asking Laney to leave him.

Maybe his efforts to save Laney had unbalanced the mission and set countless arms dealers after her. Well, he’d save her from them, too. He’d save the whole goddamn world, because just watching her twirl a twisty tie made him feel hopeful. And every one of her crazy words filled him with unspeakable joy. And the way she held her lips when she was angry made him happy, and so did her filthy mouth, and all that energetic red hair she hid under that brown dye. There was even something about those songs of hers, much as they nettled him. No, it was more that they pierced him...pummeled him.

My binge reading of romantic suspense continues. I read two Carolyn Crane's books from her the Associates series. I started from the second book because it had kind of a nerdy hero which is what I was looking for at the time.

Peter Macmillan is an agent from the Associates, he used to be a professor however after the death of his fiancée and his parents this all changed. He started using his power of linguistics to identify the individual responsible for the death of his family which led him to becoming part of the Associates. Now he's after a guy that has a weapon that can destroy millions of people and on this mission he meets Laney. **Laney Lancaster** is a singer/songwriter who sings in a hotel club in Bangkok, she is also, on the run from her abusive ex. When they meet, the both have this instant connection to each other and everything about Laney from her song lyrics to her personality speaks to Peter, more importantly it speaks to the guy he used to be. I loved these two together. Both of them were running from something and ultimately towards each other.

What I liked: I really enjoyed the book, maybe it was because of the **linguistics** aspect that was included in the book as well as the romance and the suspense which was all done very well. This was one of those unique stories that's different from others out there maybe because of the hero, Peter and the heroine, Laney are both **unique and wonderful** themselves and so is their romance. The action, suspense and the secrets made the book even more interesting.

What I didn't like: One of the things I love about stories with agents or military types is the bond that keeps them together, the friendship and caring for each other. The two heads of the Associates while fascinating, make a decision about Peter, who they both individually know that made me unhappy with them. But I'm glad Peter had friends in the Associates to be there for him. Lastly, Laney should really trust her instincts and when Peter told her to run or something she wouldn't, one of those times she saved Peter, the others not so much which made me slightly annoyed at her.

Amanda says

3.5 stars

I'm really excited for Carolyn Crane's new release as usual. I've read most of her books and I love Book 1 *Against the Dark* featuring Cole, the math expert and Angel, the safe cracker.

This time we have Peter Maxwell Macmillan, the linguist expert, who was cool, dapper and together. Hmm... love these brainiac men. The things he can deduce from listening to someone talking was simply fascinating. I kinda felt afraid to talk in front of him, worried he might discover my deepest secrets.

"When you're a dragon and your habitat is legends, the shadow of a high rise, a bed of wrappers, that's nothing."

Our heroine, Laney was the ex-wife of Rolly, a mobster. She was living out her life hiding in Bangkok. For two years, she had an invisible life as lounge singer or so she thought, until she met Maxwell, the man who *hear* her cry through her songs.

Macmillan was on a mission to track Jazzman, who was going to auction off the TZ (some sort of high tech weapon that can level down an entire city). The Associates need to find Jazzman and stop the auction from happening.

Laney happened to have something that Macmillan needs in order to further his research and he set out upon

to befriend her. They have an instant connection due to their interest in poetry and language in general. When Laney found out that Macmillan was not who he seemed to be and worried that he might be working for Rolly, she felt torn, yet she still want to believe in the man who seemed to connect with her.

Macmillan seemed like some kind of superhero that just won't go down. He had been tortured, held imprisoned and beaten to a pulp, yet he was still up and running. He tend wall up his feelings by rationalizing every situation with words. He even want to talk about what the word 'fuck' meant in different situation. I found Laney to be the perfect match for him. They both can discuss about the meaning behind every words all day long.

"You bleeding?"

"No. I've shifted to the coagulation and infection stage. I'm running them concurrently."

This had a very good engaging action and suspense plot. However, I'm a little disappointed that it was light on romance. The multiple POV from different players gave us a three dimensional perspective, but it take the focus off the hero and heroine. Macmillan and Laney was only together in 40% of the story and even that they were mostly in life threatening situation. I still prefer Book 1 Against the Dark. It had a more well balance romance, action and humour. Considering other players such as Dax, Rio and Thorne were featured heavily, I wonder why did Cole not make any appearance?

Regina says

Off the Edge is the second in the Associates, a romantic suspense series. While I am a fan of Suzanne Brockman's Troubleshooter series, I tend not to be a fan generally of romantic suspense. For awhile, I thought I might be into romantic suspense but then I realized it was only the Troubleshooters that I loved. So Off the Edge is not in my typical genre. In many romantic suspense novels I tried, I just couldn't buy into the caper or the suspense part and (I hesitate to say this) in the romantic suspense genre the characters seem to be less well developed – the stories focus more on an unbelievable action story and steam. Please forgive me if I am trampling all over your preferred genre and I admit I have only tried a few non-Troubleshooters romantic suspense books. (So if you have some romantic suspense you think I should try with fantastically developed characters ala Suzanne Brockmann, let me know!) But if an author gives me a meaty well-written character, that is not perfect nor a stereotype then I will likely enjoy the book — and that is what Off the Edge delivers. Add in to the truly beautiful writing,

"Maybe she could trust him. The idea of trusting him felt like a flower in her heart."

"You saw a lot of this mix of color and concrete grubbiness in Bangkok. Decrepitude and wealth at vivid angles with each other, like shards from different mirrors."

The setting is Bangkok and the story takes place almost entirely inside of a hotel where the heroine is living and has been living for several years. The heroine, Laney, is on the run from an abusive scary husband and lives in the hotel where she performs every night. She sings country style songs that she wrote herself and which have immense emotional meaning to her. The hero, Macmillan, is a linguist and words are his super power. He works for an agency and the skill he offers his employer, rooted in his linguist background, is his

ability to recognize voice patterns and identify people by those patterns. Macmillan's love for words and speech patterns first attracts him to Laney – he becomes interested in the songs she sings (which she wrote). Once the two meet, there is some cute word play, which was pretty unexpected.

“You bleeding?” “No,” he said. “I’ve shifted to the coagulation and infection stage. I’m running them concurrently.”

“Well, thank you, Professor Devilwell, PhD in asshole arrogance.”

And of course the sparks fly between the two. Macmillan is not the perfect spy-hero. When we meet him he is tired and over the course of the book he acknowledges that certain villains could take him because he is tired and has been physically beat up. But his focus is on speech and fighting the bad guys with his knowledge and that is where the battle for him takes place. It was fun to watch.

Laney is definitely not the perfect heroine (for me this is part of the appeal). She can't fight and she repeatedly makes bad choices. But the choices make sense in the story itself and that is what I loved. She is caught in an impossible situation and she wants to believe that the people who are her friends really do care for her. Throughout the story, Macmillan questions Laney's choices and makes fun of her attempts at hiding from her husband and I loved that!

“You don’t wait until it so obvious that a man in a cell in the basement of a tropical hotel has to point it out to you. No, you fly.”

“There’s no such thing as a Disney criminal, Laney.”

The author sets up a situation where yeah, Laney isn't the perfect on the run heroine and then has the other characters call her out on it. Perfect. For me, Carolyn Crane deliberate wrote Laney's choices as the critique of her choices was part of the story line. So for me that worked. I loved Laney and I got her.

In the end, Off the Edge is funny, sweet, steamy and enjoyable. It is a quick action packed read. Fans of Carolyn Crane will most certainly enjoy this book. Readers who enjoy characters who don't fit stereotypical hero/heroine molds and like word play banter will enjoy Off the Edge.

To more of this review and others like it check out [Badass Book Reviews](#)

Anna (Bobs Her Hair) says

4.5 stars (I may round up to a 5. For now, a 4. Need to let the book high settle down. ;)

Smart, Sexy Romantic Suspense...Loved it!

Review to come.

ARC provided by author in exchange for reviewing book #1. Reviewing this book (#2) is optional.

Sunny says

4.5 stars

This is an ARC Review originally posted at:

<http://loveaffairwithanereader.blogspot...>

Off the Edge is book two in The Associates series by Carolyn Crane.

Carolyn Crane writes deliciously complicated stories. They are so smart and clever, it makes me feel smarter after I read them. In *Off the Edge*, she uses linguistics as the centerpiece of the story. Linguistics is a weapon. I've taken a few linguistic classes in my career and no one has ever made it as fun as Ms. Crane. I bet if language professors could promote linguistics as a superhero skill, there would be lines of students trying to get into classes.

There is a certain quality to Carolyn Crane's writing. I can't quite put my finger on it. All I can say is that when I read her books, I think of movies created in primary colors - like the Dick Tracy movie starring Warren Beatty. I think it is because her characters are colorful. They have unique gifts, oftentimes cerebral talents, like this one. Peter MacMillian is a linguist. He studies pauses, cadences, sounds, slang, and he can track them to a geographic region. It is impressive to realize how much one gives away in the the way one talks and the words one chooses. Yes, it is a language GPS.

He could see a universe in a single word choice. He used his expertise to understand people, and by extension humanity itself.

Yet, there is also ambiguity in this story as well. It is not always clear who the heroes and villains are. People you think are heroes don't always act heroically. Villains are not always who they seem. Like I said, complicated.

This is also a love story. Laney is a poet, singer/songwriter running from her abusive past. She is living in Thailand terrified that her ex-husband will find her. Here she meets Peter, a stranger who shares a similar love for words and poetry. They connect on a visceral level: *"He'd connected. It made him feel familiar from the inside out."*

Laney and Peter both thrive for emotional connection. Peter is unaware of how essential that is to him until he meets her. She becomes his moral compass and he is awakened. It's a beautiful story that starts with her lyrics and ends with him saving the world! Perfect romantic suspense, right?

IN A NUTSHELL:

Do yourself a favor and pick up this Carolyn Crane book. It is unique and stimulating and one of my favorites for this year.

Thank you to the author, publisher and Netgalley for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

sraxe says

I went into this book hoping that Macmillan would have to suffer and be brought down to his knees for being a huge douche in the last book, but I was left sorely disappointed. Instead, like the last book, the heroine, Laney, forgives him rather easily. And actually, this book just felt like a lazy rehash of the first at times. Repeating a single trope or element isn't necessary bad, but when you're doing it two, three, five, (etc) times...well, it starts feeling like I'm looking at the same image, just with a slightly different finish.

This book is super instalovey, just like the first one. In fact, the "love" connection happens over a three day span...exactly like the first one. And just like the first one, the h has sexual hang-ups, while the H sleeps with many women. In the first one there was a running joke (them pretending to be in a relationship and calling one another "darling"), which is an element present here, as well (with the hotel star ratings). First one, heroine is running from a past; this one, heroine is running from a past. First, H claims he can't love for whatever reason; in this, same thing. First, damsel in distress rescue by the H; second, TSTL damsel in distress rescue by the H. In both, the H deceives the h.

You see what I mean? One of those elements being repeated would've been fine, but when you've got so many...? Well, you may as well stick the other characters names in place of the ones in this and call it a day. (The only thing I'm grateful for is that at least the H doesn't spend three-fourths of the novel dead-set on the idea that he must sacrifice the h if worse comes to worst.)

And of those repeated elements, I really wasn't happy with a lot of it.

The whole cliched ~tortured past~ hero who can't love for whatever reason? Been there, done that; nothing new here. In this book, he feels he doesn't have the ability to love anymore after having lost his family, including his fiancée, Gwen, in a terrorist attack ten years ago. Fine. That's fair, I guess. My problem is that while he's got this tortured bullshit going on, the heroine isn't being a big emo baby like he is. She spent years in a frightening, abusive relationship, and is still in hiding from said abusive husband and his goons, yet she's not afraid to love and go out on a limb. It's annoying that the H gets an excuse for being horrible.

And like the first book, the sexual hang-ups of the h and the promiscuity of the H were very annoying. In this book, it's mentioned over and over again that Macmillan has been with many, many women. He's said to have "had a lot of sex" and has "extensive experience undressing the opposite sex" because he's "seduced dozens of women," even though, to him, "sex was nothing but a highly useful tool," which was used "always for the job."

The heroine, in contrast to this, doesn't get that. Even though she was with her abusive ex for several years, and even though she's had sex since she went into hiding two years ago, she's never experienced a single orgasm with a sexual partner. Ugh...really? *Really?* I hated this gigantic difference in their sex lives. At first I was grateful that Laney wasn't a virgin, but I was still afraid she might've been celibate during those two years on the run. And then I was happy to learn that she wasn't. However, she may as well have been (a virgin or celibate) because Macmillan shows up and becomes her sexual salvation. Also, this disparity in their sexual experiences was similar to how it was in the first, with the heroine having been celibate for five

years there.

If the H, who has a tortured past, gets to have lots of sex and enjoy it, can't the h be given the same? She's already had to suffer through an abusive relationship since she was 18, couldn't she be given the benefit of sexual pleasure in that time? Ugh.

Another thing between Laney and Macmillan that left me annoyed was Macmillan's late fiancée, Gwen. There are a lot of mentions of her. He was completely in love with her, and he's pretty much been dead inside since she was killed. So while Laney is special in the sense that he's had no feelings for the "dozens of women" he's been with in the last ten years, when compared to Gwen, she's nothing special in that he's never felt it before. He always relays how he feels for Laney back to Gwen ("since Gwen" this, "since Gwen" that), which got annoying to hear about. Although Laney is something new in the last ten years and he cares for her, it's annoying to read that while he's a new and wonderful and unique experience for her, she's not the same because he's already felt it all before.

Another repeated element was with h forgiving the H for his deceit very easily. The first book was pretty stingy with the emotional fallout and grovelling, but I was hoping the author would remedy that here. After being a huge douche in the last book, I was hoping Macmillan would have to suffer Laney's anger because he had sex with her under false pretenses and used her. Instead, he saves her and all is forgiven. I was so dissatisfied with it, just like in the last. So, you can have the hero being mean, deceitful and just saying and doing hurtful things to the heroine time and again, but he doesn't have to grovel or make up for any of it because, thanks to the author's machinations, the heroine is put into a situation in which the hero has to ride in on his white horse and rescue the damsel in distress heroine.

And let's talk about that, shall we. In the first book, the heroine makes a TSTL decision. I didn't like it, but I still felt it could be excused because I'd felt that the author had set it up well enough that, within the context of the novel, it was a believable decision to make on her part. In this one, the heroine's just an idiot. Besides, in the first book, Angel was forced into going along with what Cole wanted. In this one, Laney is just an idiot for trusting someone she knows jack shit about. Like, this guy deceived her, slept with her under false pretenses, was caught snooping through her computer, and then found to be carrying three guns, including one designed to beat metal detectors. And she thinks this guy's all good and trustworthy...compared to the family who's housed her, sheltered her, and has just had her back and protected her for the last two years? Sure, it works out in the end because Macmillan is the "good" guy, but it's dumb when you really think about it.

And Macmillan was also right about her performing. She's on the run...and she think it's perfectly fine to sing in front of dozens of foreign people nightly in a hotel? And to wear a hat...that obviously someone who's trying to hide their identity would wear? You don't even have to be a genius Associate to realize the stupidity in that!

And then, even though she suspects her bff, Rajini, and her brothers, she still confides in them. She's suspicious of Rajini (and even has them confirmed when she realizes Rajini actually IS lying to her), but she still tells her that her brother, Charlie, is acting weird. It's dumb and TSTL. On one hand, she's trusting Macmillan and being suspicious of her friends, on the other she's confiding in said friends she's suspicious of. It's inconsistent and makes no sense.

Anyway, I'll continue reading the series because it's mindless entertainment (and I already have the other books), and I'm interested in knowing what's going to happen with the Association next, but I wouldn't rec it if you're looking for more here. tbh, if you've read the first one, you've pretty much read this one, too.

On a side note, if you torture is a trigger or just makes you uncomfortable, I'd avoid this book. Macmillan is tortured at one point (view spoiler) (And while we're talking about that...can we just all agree that after your

SO has been beat up, (view spoiler)...it's probably not the time to have sex, ya know? Like...we can all agree to this, right?)

And on a final note...what was up with the mole in the Association from the last book? It was mentioned that Cole recognized the name when they caught the mole, but it wasn't elaborated on after being solved. I didn't mention it in my review for the other book because I assumed it'd be built up on at a later point, but it wasn't mentioned at all here. Disappointing, tbh, if it was simply used as a plot device.

Laylaw says

4 Stars for a very interesting suspense story! I loved that it had some of the usual elements- danger, death, etc. but it was an intelligent read. The main characters were basically masters of their words and found that connection. Peter Macmillan Maxwell is a secret agent of sorts who uses his linguistic background as cover. He has a Clark kent appeal to him and I loved it. Laney is like a little changed bird just bursting to get out.

The story had lots of layers to it, and alot of those stories came out in Laney's song writing. I definetly will be picking up additional books in this series as some of the outside players held alot of intrigue, i.e. Fedor, Rio, Dax... Trust me- those guys have a story to tell.

Alot of action, word sleuthing, and some you really feel the characters they are multi-dimensional. There is a little bit of predictability in it with the whole ex-husband thing and even some heartache on the BFF front, but a worthwhile read!

This honest review was done in exchange for an ARC through NetGalley- Caroyln Crane and CrushStar Multimedia, LLC

Ian says

Laney is on the run. She sent Rolly, her violent and abusive husband to prison, but he isn't one to forgive and she can never let her guard down. She has landed in Thailand where she works as a singer in a friend's hotel...far from his reach. Until Rolly's second in command and main enforcer walks into the restaurant where she is having lunch.

Macmillan is a hunter. But his weapon isn't a gun, it's words. Since he lost everyone he loved in a terrorist attack, he has used their very own words to hunt down evil doers around the world. He is in Thailand hunting the Jazzman, a criminal with a weapon to sell, a weapon that in the wrong hands could bring governments to their knees. When he sees Laney singing in the hotel where the auction is being held, he immediately knows she is on the run, he feels an immediate connection to her, and then he discovers she might hold the key to catching the Jazzman.

Romantic Suspense is a genre dominated by a few archetypes and a few recurring themes. I don't often see something I haven't already seen a bunch of times. But Carolyn Crane always, and I really do mean always, surprises me. She somehow finds these completely oddball ideas and manages to build believable and thoroughly entertaining stories around them.

Solid gold five stars.

Many thanks to Crush Star Multimedia and Netgalley for providing me with this ARC

Katie Reus says

Got to read an early copy and loved this just as much as the first in the series. The suspense and sexiness is a perfect balance! I want more of the Associates!

Jennifer says

3.5 stars

Originally posted at The Book Nympho

The suspense in *Off the Edge* takes center stage. With the mission and running from Laney's ex the action and emotions run high. But don't worry there's enough romance and sexy to keep romance lovers happy.

Laney is an american living in Bangkok. Sounds exotic, right? Yeah it would be if she wasn't hiding from her ex. Then she meets a handsome stranger that knows all the right things to say and is deadly as hell.

Peter is in Bangkok on a mission with the Association, a top-secret group working to take down evil people. And he knows all the right things to say because he's a linguistics expert. He can hunt people down by their voices and they way they talk.

Laney and Peter's attraction is super hot and they are just what the other needs. Peter needs help letting go and opening up. Laney helps him do that. Laney needs help learning to be a little closed off when it's called for and Peter helps her see that. There really is a balance to the two when they are together.

So far each book in the Associates series by Carolyn Crane could be read as a stand alone. Some of the secondary characters show up but you wouldn't be lost if you started with *Off the Edge* .

Next please! I'm now reading book 3, *Into the Shadows*.
