

# Nothing to Lose

Pages: 208

Publisher: Texas Christian University Press (May 31, 2014)

Format: pdf, epub

Language: English

---

**[ DOWNLOAD FULL EBOOK PDF ]**

---

## **Nothing to Lose**

### **Nothing to Lose**

a novel

**Jim Sanderson**

Fort Worth,

Texas

Copyright © 2014 by Jim Sanderson

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sanderson, Jim, 1953-

Nothing to lose : a novel / by Jim Sanderson.

pages cm

ISBN 978-0-87565-578-9 (alk. paper)

1. Private investigators—Texas—Beaumont—Fiction. 2. Murder—Texas—Beaumont—Investigation—Fiction. 3. Bars (Drinking establishments)—Texas—Beaumont—Fiction. 4. Beaumont (Tex.)—Fiction. I. Title.

PS3569.A5146N68 2013

813'.54—dc23

2014042131

TCU Press

TCU Box 298300

Fort Worth, Texas 76129

817.257.7822

[www.prs.tcu.edu](http://www.prs.tcu.edu)

To order books: 1.800.826.8911

Cover design by Barbara Whitehead

ISBN 978-0-87565-579-6 (e-book)

## **CONTENTS**

[ONE](#)

[TWO](#)

[THREE](#)

[FOUR](#)

[FIVE](#)

[SIX](#)

[SEVEN](#)

[EIGHT](#)

[NINE](#)

[TEN](#)

[ELEVEN](#)

[TWELVE](#)

[THIRTEEN](#)

[FOURTEEN](#)

[FIFTEEN](#)

[SIXTEEN](#)

[SEVENTEEN](#)

[EIGHTEEN](#)

[NINETEEN](#)

[TWENTY](#)

[TWENTY-ONE](#)

[TWENTY-TWO](#)

[TWENTY-THREE](#)

[TWENTY-FOUR](#)

[TWENTY-FIVE](#)

[TWENTY-SIX](#)

[TWENTY-SEVEN](#)

[ABOUT THE AUTHOR](#)

## **ONE**

The good thing about Beaumont in September is that it isn't Beaumont in August. September is mostly hot and muggy with air so thick you almost have to shove it up your nose with your thumb. August makes you wish you were dead, makes you forget what it is like to wear a clean, dry shirt, makes you believe that the true son of God is Willis Carrier, the man who invented practical air-conditioning. July is just as bad. June, May, September, and October are just miserable, not unbearable.

I live on the southeastern edge of Texas's Pine Curtain, in Beaumont. In my house, near Jefferson County's northern line, I am surrounded by pines. If I drive just a little south, down state Highway 69, the Eastex Freeway, I am in marshland and former rice fields. The pines give up, as though this soil is just too soft, porous, and damp to support a sizeable tree.

In Jefferson and Orange Counties the humidity soaks through everything, never lets up, never truly lets the sun in to dry things out. So the people living behind the Pine Curtain live in claustrophobic damp, dark, smelly tunnels carved under the trees and through undergrowth, mud, mush, and swamps. Texans have an Aggie joke. An Aggie takes his girl out parking. They get passionate. She tells the Aggie that she wants him to kiss her someplace dark, smelly, and wet. So he drives her to Beaumont.

But we had made it partially through September without a hurricane, fall was coming, and I had money in my pocket. I had been on a good gig. Denny's management claimed that a late-night shift worker was running her hands through the till and taking some home with her in the early mornings. Management paid me to take photos of her leaving the shift and to follow her for a while. I was hoping for her to escape prosecution—whether she was stealing or not. Whatever

happened to her, I had gotten paid well. And then a chemical engineer in midcounty, Cody Hudson, paid me to take photos of his wife's affair with an aging ex-hippie named Harry Krammer. I figured I deserved to cool down just as the summer was starting to.

So I was jogging along one of my usual routes: one of the drainage canals that cross Tram Road. And the jogging, on that September day, felt almost good. A late morning summer shower caught me, and though sloshing through mud, I was cooled. I hurried because soon the sun would come out and turn the banks of the canal into a sauna.

I passed the upside down tallow trees, the ones bent over by Hurricane Rita so that they were growing in the wrong direction, but still growing, seething, disgustingly refusing to die with dignity. Tallows are trash trees. Like the hyacinth plants, nutria rats, and fire ants, tallow trees were imported (for decoration or by accident), so like the fire ant, nutria rats, and hyacinth, the tallow trees have no real deterrents to their quests to dominate the area.

Stepping fast instead of actually running as I used to do, I passed the "blue roofs" with their blue shards that waved to me in the slight breezes. In my neighborhood, on the southern tip of the Big Thicket, and thus the edge of the meth labs and small marijuana plant gardens, the people were poor. Those that stayed took advantage of the government supplied temporary roofing as long as they could.

To mark the millennium, God sent his wrath upon Southeast Texas in the form of Hurricane Rita. People died, not in the midst of God's wrath, but in escaping it—old folks and the infirm dying in buses caught in the evacuation route traffic jams. God's wrath damaged most of the buildings. One movie theater and the airport terminal took two years to recover.

For years, in and around town, we still saw blue roofs. The temporary tarps that the government provided stayed on poor people's roofs until the blue dissolved or shredded. With the roofs gone, the buildings soon disintegrated. So God with his hurricane solved the social problems that government never could fix. When the un- or under-employed left, they didn't come back. And when their buildings fell in on them, the persistently poor just left.

Jogging was penance for the night before. Jogging hurt. It made me feel every one of my fifty-some-odd-mostly-misspent years. But it felt good when I finished—just like penance. And sometimes, the jogging, like the penance, felt good in and of itself. And sometimes, after I finished, I felt like I had learned something since I myself had given up on being upwardly mobile.

That's right, I'm nearly spooky religious. You see, the pines have a natural swamp gas sifting around their bases, roiling around at night. The timber treatment plant and the gas and oil refineries add their rotten-egg and sour smells. You can see all of these smells. They are gray with a tint of greenish-blue mixed in. Living in the pine swamps, the people just naturally have visions and want to kiss snakes. No matter what their beliefs, they become Pentecostals. Or they hide from what they know and become Baptists. One way or the other, we're all religious down in these swamps. The area behind and near Texas's Pine Curtain is governed by three *Ps*: pine, petroleum, and Pentecostals.

I had just stepped off the canal, and was baby-stepping, like an old man jogs, down Tram, toward my house. I ran into traffic, and out of the corner of my eye I saw a Jefferson County Sheriff's car slow down in the opposite lane. I slowed down. The car pulled as far off the road as it could, and Deputy Sheriff Emily Nguyen stepped out of the driver's side. I stopped jogging, and Emily and I stared across the road. Emily was just barely taller than the roof of the car. The Jefferson County Sheriff's department uniform just didn't look right on her. It gave her no authority. Thank God, she

knew enough about how she looked to wear a baseball-style cap instead of the cowboy hat most deputy sheriffs wore. "Get in," she said.

"I'm jogging."

"You're getting too old for jogging. It's bad on your joints," Emily yelled at me. "Get in," she said. She could never stay away from her point for long.

I walked across the road. "Somebody shot and killed Harry Krammer," Emily said.

"What's that got to do with me?"

"The crime scene investigators found some of your photos in the house." While my mind was whirring to try to keep my mouth from getting me in trouble, I said, "How do they know the pictures are mine?"

"Who else's would they be?"

"How the hell did they get in his house?"

"That's what I was wondering."

"Can't I take a shower?"

"No. I'm not supposed to know anything. Get in the car."

I circled around the car to the passenger's side and got in. When Emily climbed in and buckled up, the faint stink of my sweat and leftover cigarette smoke that had soaked into my hair and skin the night before filled the car.

Stink, though, besides making my head hurt and besides making me thirsty, makes my mind work. I didn't think, which I should have, but I remembered.

. . .

Three weeks before, I rang Cody Hudson's doorbell to deliver the photos he had hired me to take of his wife and Harry Krammer. It was the first time I had met him. We had done our business over the phone. Cody answered the door, pulled it open, and looked down at my shorts. "It's hot. Private investigators don't have dress codes," I said.

"I thought you guys wore trench coats?"

"It's Beaumont, dude," I said.

He let me in. He was dressed in a white shirt and tie. I could see his hard hat and his goggles lying on the dining room table. "So let's have it. I took a couple of hours off, but I have to get back to the plant."

Cody flipped through my photos. "Oh my God," he said. The one he saw was of Jessica and Harry kissing as she left his house early one morning. After I had taken that photo, an elderly lady in color-coordinated purple and blue jogging tights banged on my side window and wanted to know what I was doing in the neighborhood. I drove away with her memorizing my license plate and threatening to call the police. She did call. And for the umpteenth time the Beaumont Police

Department called me and told me to be more discreet.

"I have a list of where they were for the past two weeks. I can give you an estimate of how much time he spent with her, when they turned in, when she left. I have more photos, same as those."

"Who is this son of a bitch?" Cody asked.

"He's a social worker. From what I can tell, a lot of people speak very highly of him, from his clients to his friends. He's got a master's degree. He's a gentle sort. A nice guy, with a few past addictions, a few too many ex-girlfriends. You need some more?"

"What's that got to do with my wife?"

"It just shows I'm thorough. I try to give you your money's worth."

"I'm not sure that I want my money's worth."

We were still standing next to the front door. Oblivious to me, Cody turned from me and plodded into his living room. "So what am I going to do?" he mumbled.

I stepped in, not wanting to comment, but wanting my check. "I generally find . . ."

"What did I do wrong?"

"In my business, and in my general observations, I find it best not to question. If you could . . ."

"How could she just turn her back?"

"Mr. Hudson, perhaps if you look at this as a step forward. This does not have to be the end of anything, but maybe a beginning, no matter what happens. We can all adapt and adjust and move forward." Of course, I really didn't believe what I was saying. I really didn't believe I was saying it. But I had found that if I listened to Oprah or Dr. Phil and remembered those clichés, those same clichés could calm my clients and get me my check a lot faster. And if I got the check and could excuse myself before things got really nasty, I could avoid the truth: which was the yelling and the screaming and the accusations and then the divorce.

"But how could she? Didn't I give her everything?" He paced to think. "When did she have the time?" I didn't answer. He looked at me, and the way his brows knit together told me that I owed him an explanation.

"She'd usually meet him after school. And at nights, when you were away, she'd telephone the sitters, and well. . . . It's never really that hard—if you want to," and here, out of meanness or spite, I said, "and she wanted to."

"What do I do?"

"I don't know. That's not my job."

Cody came toward me shaking his head. "I've got to get back to work," he said.

"Mr. Hudson, just one more thing, if you could." He straightened, I dropped my head, "My second check."

. . .  
Emily got on 69, exited on Dowlen, drove past the mall and the franchise stores sprouting up and down Dowlen and thus creating traffic jams, and pulled into Beaumont's latest addition to its cultural growth: the new Krispy Kreme doughnut shop. Emily and I sat across from each other with my coffee and water in front of me and Emily's coffee in front of her, and three disgusting doughnuts in the middle of the plastic table. She finally reached and grabbed a doughnut while I sipped my water.

"I'm not supposed to know about this. The Beaumont Police Department is handling it. But since I'm one of the few cops in this town who like you, I thought I'd better warn you about what's coming your way." Emily didn't look at me but at her doughnut.

"Emily, you're still doing the work of three white men."

Emily smiled, "Stop your redneck act. You're not as backward as you like to pretend."

"If they knew I was smart, they'd try harder to fuck me."

"You do good enough fucking yourself."

"What's coming my way?"

"Somebody is going to question you. Maybe if you just voluntarily showed up at the police station, you'd be forgiven rather quickly."

"You're an angel, Emily."

Emily munched the doughnut as methodically as she did everything else. Then she looked down at the half still between her fingers. "You know these suck. They're just nothing but sugar."

"You can have mine," I said.

After we finished at the doughnut shop, instead of driving back down Dowlen to 69, Emily pulled into the Walmart Supercenter. "What are we doing?"

"I'm going to buy you a towel and a T-shirt. You're starting to stink. Then we're going to go by the crime scene. I think I can get you past the yellow tape."

. . .  
Old Town Beaumont used to be all old rich. But it had become some old rich, some new rich, and some crack houses. It was full of gays, transvestites, drug dealers, theatrical types, poor students—those folks trying to escape overpriced rent in suave apartment complexes by living in older homes. Harry fit right in. He lived in what would have been called a bungalow if it had been built in Southern California in the thirties instead of in Beaumont. It was a modest cottage stuck between what had been near mansions.

As Emily and I walked across the yard, the neighbors gawked at the yellow tape decorating Harry's porch. They gawked at me, too, as Emily led me up to the cop guarding the crime scene. "Nobody is allowed inside the tape," he said.

"I've got permission," Emily said.

"Nobody," the cop said, then looked at me. "Seen any good pictures?" he asked me. I recognized him. He was in a couple of my photos.

Emily tried again. "Look, Arthur knows me . . ."

"Nobody goes past the tape." Several elderly people gathered behind us. They started asking us what had happened in whispers.

"Shit," Emily said and ducked under the tape. "Come on, Roger," she said.

The cop just smirked. "So you recognized me?" I asked.

"Every cop recognizes you. Even in your underwear." I glanced down at my jogging shorts. "If you ain't already figured it out, you better be real careful."

When I stepped into the house, I heard, "Get the hell out of my investigation." We adjusted our eyes to the dark and looked around. I saw Arthur Solieu eating a tuna sandwich. Arthur was a fat man, and his fat, unwrinkled fingers looked like two Vienna sausages joined by a knuckle, and a half Vienna sausage attached to the last knuckle. He sucked the mayonnaise off one of his fingers. "You two sightseers back your asses on out of here."

"Hello, Arthur," Emily said.

"Emily Nguyen, this is a city matter. Keep the county in its usual indifferent position."

"Hello, Arthur," I said.

"Who are you?" Arthur said as he munched a potato chip.

"I'm Roger Jackson."

"I heard of you. In fact, don't you go nowhere. You're a suspect."

I looked over at Emily as if to blame her, and she just shook her head, as though she were disappointed in Arthur.

Arthur carefully laid his quarter of a sandwich on a plate and walked to us, wiping his hand on his shirttail. "Glad you could dress for the occasion," Arthur said and shook my hand with the one he had just wiped on his shirt.

"So what do you know, Arthur?" Emily asked.

"This your typical dress?" Arthur asked me.

"Emily stopped me jogging. I usually put on a nicer pair of shorts."

"I thought it was me, or the remnants of old Harry, that was getting gamey."

"Do you recognize anything?" Emily asked me. I looked around. Harry decorated his apartment in early destitute bachelor, sort of like me. Secondhand furniture, the end table and coffee table had glass stains, chips, and buckles in the wood. The sofa used to have blue and green stripes, but the fabric had faded into a dark mint green. No ashtrays. No pictures or photos on the wall. Shoes were scattered throughout the place. He had probably come home, shucked off his shoes, and

then flopped onto his sofa for a microwave dinner and then some TV, probably baseball or football. The only expensive thing in the room was the thirty-two-inch flat screen. My eyes stopped on a bookcase. It was crammed with books, mostly paperbacks, most new—not leftover college textbooks. College graduation was the time most people stopped reading. I stepped to the bookshelf and pulled out a novel.

“Hey, don’t touch that,” Arthur said. It was recently published. Emily and Arthur followed me into the bedroom. Same story: magazines, books, shoes, underwear, dirty clothes. Almost as though displayed, a flat football was on his dresser. The bedroom had photos. One was of a young Harry in what looked like a soccer uniform with his arm around a black teammate. “That fellow is now vice principal at Main High School,” Arthur said. Another photo was of an attractive lady in her fifties or sixties. She was thin, almost gaunt, so wrinkles showed in her face, but she had a youthful gleam in her eye. She would probably have been too old for Harry, not for me.

Arthur slipped on some rubber gloves and pushed open the bathroom door. I stepped in. It was where he had been killed. “Blood scares me. Makes me want to hurl,” I said and stepped out, and Emily and Arthur followed me into the living room.

For Harry Krammer, his cheap rental house was just a place to sleep, watch TV, and read, and then it occurred to me that to Harry it was also the place to consummate his affair with Jessica Hudson, and maybe with the older lady in the photo. “So how’s the crime scene analysis coming?”

“Oh just fine,” Arthur said. “Soon as I get all the hairs and fingernail slivers and such scraped off and sent to the Beaumont PD lab; then they’ll run it through the electro-proton calimeter and figure out the DNA, the exact minute the murder took place, and who the murderer’s daddy is. Just like on that TV show.”

Emily started to chuckle, but before she could speak, I asked, “And why am I here?”

“I’m trying to help a friend . . .” Emily said.

“Me or Arthur?” Emily hung her head as though I was scolding her. “Look, I wouldn’t be here from the middle of my jog unless you two wanted me here.”

Arthur held out a thumb as though counting, “Number one you are a suspect.”

“How did you figure that out?”

“They’re your photos.”

“Oh, Jesus.”

“You show them to him. You get in an argument. You, you . . .”

“You’re slowing down, Arthur.”

Emily spoke out. “They’re your photos. We can figure out who that woman is in the photo with Harry, and since she legally lives in Nederland, out of Arthur’s jurisdiction, I’m here. Now, we were hoping you might be able to explain just a little before we ask more questions.” Her voice was strong enough to scare me.

“Were you taking the photos for him?” Arthur asked.

"I don't kiss and tell."

"Then number one suspect is you," Arthur with his fingers again. "Number two is that woman, or her husband, or both of them. You want to elaborate any?" Arthur stood in front of me with his fat Vienna-sausage-length thumb sticking out of his fist and his two-Vienna-sausage-length forefinger sticking out of his fist.

"I took the photos and delivered them three weeks ago."

"Husband pay good?" Arthur asked.

"They're usually the ones with the money," Emily said. They waited but I didn't say anything.

Arthur held out his middle finger. "Number three is the cocaine supplier."

"The who?" I asked, and both Emily and I looked at Arthur.

"I snooped around and found a little tiny baggy. The lab people told me that, even without testing it, they knew it was really bad, nasty stuff—low-grade shit. Probably cut once or twice in Houston, once more here in Beaumont. Then probably some way down-and-out dealer cut it another time or two. I mean, look around. Has Harry got the dough to get good cocaine? I mean, who did he know could have got him anything better, even if he had the money? From the sleazy dives he hangs out in, as evidenced by those photos of yours, he's gonna meet the talcum powder and baking soda people."

"So are the papers gonna say that one dooper shot another?" I asked.

Arthur shrugged his shoulders. "Unless you can tell me how mad the husband was."

"Or her," Emily said.

"Or them," Arthur said.

"Or the guy he, she, or they hired," Emily said.

I closed my eyes. I felt the air push in on me. I almost choked on its thickness. "I don't want to be a part of this. I don't want to go with you. I'm off the case. I'm just the guy who took the pictures. Maybe I'm not an innocent, but I am a bystander. Uh uh, no way. I ain't helping."

Emily said, "We know that it was premeditated. Got to be."

Arthur was next to me. "But the stupid fucker was not a pro. We got the gun. Of course, it'll be registered to some guy in Ohio, and there's no prints on the gun. Shooter probably followed him into the bathroom and shot him. That didn't do the trick, so they shot him again. And from the looks of it, whoever shot him, shot him just as he was taking a pee."

Emily looked at me. "Harry didn't know me," I said. "You don't just get up and go take a pee in front of somebody you don't know. It had to be somebody he trusted, not me," I said.

"All we got is your word you don't know him," Arthur said.

I looked at Emily; Emily looked at Arthur and said, "Come on, Arthur. Quit picking on Roger."

"Could it have been a robbery?" I asked.

Emily shrugged. "Harry didn't have any money. He could've stiffed the guy. He could have just been in over his head," Emily said. "Whatever, he ran into a real fuckup of a drug dealer, hit man, or robber."

"Couldn't y'all have waited until I finished my jog and took a shower?"

"We like you in those cute shorts," Arthur said.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Be a buddy. You know, you might have access to some things," Arthur said. "And you know," he pointed one of his Vienna sausage fingers at me, "that photo business of yours is real close to extortion. You 'remember' anything, you call me, huh?"

. . .

On the way back to my house and my shower, Emily apologized for sucker punching me. Once Arthur called her, it was probably all her idea. She was a lot smarter than Arthur.

I got out of Emily's patrol car and let her kick up some gravel as she backed out of my driveway. In my shower, I realized that Arthur and Emily could win all sorts of brownie points for closing the case as quickly as possible. They were playing me to see where I flinched, so they could know what to use on me. So they got me early, during my jog, nursing a hangover. Hell of a lot to brag on. It was not that hard to make me flinch. I prided myself on flinching. I was thinking about running away. But the phone rang. \*

---

Roger Jackson is a grouch. He drinks too much with the wrong sorts of people. He dislikes where he lives—Beaumont, Texas, a small, humid southeast Texas town caught between a marsh and an impenetrable forest, between racial and social strife, between rival versions of Jesus. He dislikes his job—taking photos of cheating spouses. He dislikes his past. (He could have been a lawyer.) And now, he finds himself entangled in a crime.À

À  
When the police find an aging ex-hippie dead from bullet wounds to the head and torso, they find Roger's photos and want his help. Surrounded by a cast of colorful characters, Roger must do his job while maneuvering around the dangerous agendas of those around him. But the greatest obstacle is the recurring cocaine trail leading to Jewel McQueen, a small-time crook, who is guarded by his sociopathic brother, Sunshine McQueen, who hears voices from Jesus, Satan, and his mother. Jewell will stop at nothing—even murder—to keep his demented brother out of prison.

À  
Roger must leave the enclosed suburbs with their exclusive, prim, cleaned-up Jesus and cheap cocaine and liquor habits and, with his new partners, venture —behind the pine curtain,— into the deep Piney Woods with its wild, unruly Pentecostal Jesus and meth-lab economy and mentality.

---

Nothing to Lose But your Life - Suad Amiry - Book Reviews - Start by marking  
"Nothing to Lose (Jack Reacher, #12)" as Want to Read: Jack Reacher never  
turns back. So in Lee Child's electrifying new novel, Reacher "a man with no  
fear, no illusions, and nothing to lose" goes to war against a town that not only  
wants him gone, it Two Nothing to Lose: A Jack Reacher Novel (Paperback) -  
Perhaps a doctor prescribed losing weight as a solution to an issue that had nothing  
to do with being fat. In our society. The doctor told her to lose weight.. \$1 can lead to  
1 million books for kids in need this holiday season. Nada que perder (Nothing to  
Lose, Nada a Perder), by - ... it's a bestselling book called Dad Is Fat that he wrote  
about being a And I'm like what do they have to work for if they have nothing to lose.  
Nothing to Lose by Clare Lydon: Book Review · The Lesbian - Hinton's 1967 novel  
The Outsiders and the 1983 film of the same name. and, with children, in it; having  
nothing to lose, and, thinking a cigarette started it, Nothing to Lose (Audiobook) by  
Lee Child - Compre Nothing to Lose (Jack Reacher, Book 12) de Lee Child na  
Amazon.com.br. Confira também os eBooks mais vendidos, lançamentos e livros  
digitais Nothing to Lose " Good Books - Book Nothing to Lose: The Documentary  
(2013) - Plot Summary - Victoria Selman Entrepreneurship: Nothing to Lose and  
Everything to Gain - Because, after all, Jack Reacher has nothing to lose. He is the  
recipient of many awards, most recently Author of the Year at the 2019 British Book  
Awards. Beauty spell book - It wasn't the welcome Reacher expected. He was just  
passing through, minding his own business. But within minutes of his arrival a deputy  
is in the hospital and Nothing to Lose by Alex Flinn [book] - WordPress.com - Kirkus  
Reviews Review of "Nothing to Lose" by Lee Child - NOTHING TO LOSE Book  
36 of the Action! Series Copyright © G.A. Hauser, 2018 ISBN Trade paperback:  
978-1726-7400-9-8 © The G.A. Hauser Collection LLC

---

## Relevant Books

---

[ [DOWNLOAD](#) ] - Ebook Sapphire's Destiny (The Realms Series Book 1) pdf

---

[ [DOWNLOAD](#) ] - Book Gatlinburg Cabin Rentals Travel Guide pdf

---

[ [DOWNLOAD](#) ] - Download Free Lifted: A Purely Paranormal Short pdf

---

[ [DOWNLOAD](#) ] - Book Anatomy of a Volume Profile Trader: Learn tips and  
strategies for trading the Volume Profile. pdf

---

[\[ DOWNLOAD \]](#) - Buy Book The Victim in Criminal Law and Justice pdf, epub

---