



FATAL ATTRACTION

# Ex-Lover: We Poisoned a Dog, Then Killed Her Husband

A California mother's boy toy testified that they'd planned to off her husband with arsenic-laced pudding—and that they tested the fatal brew on a neighborhood pup.



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Sabrina Limon said that leaving her husband wasn't an option, her younger lover told police. Divorce would ruin her image in the small [San Bernardino County](#) town where she and her family lived. She'd lose their mutual friends and face a custody battle for her children. And her hubby, she claimed, would rather die than split up.

So the California mother-of-two and her beau allegedly hatched a plot to kill her spouse instead. They planned to serve her other half, Robert, arsenic-laced banana pudding, and even practiced the poison on a noisy neighborhood dog.

That's what Jonathan Michael Hearn, a 27-year-old former firefighter now facing prison time, told investigators last month.

Hearn repeated these claims Tuesday, as he testified against Limon in a Kern County court. His description of the couple's alleged scheme drew gasps from the gallery, according to the [Bakersfield Californian](#), especially when he spoke of the poisoned pooch.

The alleged killer testified that he slipped the "pretty obnoxious" pet a piece of arsenic-spiked salmon and that "about three days later, I didn't notice the neighbor dog being obnoxious anymore," the *Californian* revealed. While the canine's fate is unclear, Hearn's comments suggest he believed the animal died.

Earlier Tuesday, an investigator revealed a possible motive that went beyond Limon's and Hearn's budding romance: a \$300,000 life-insurance policy.

The Kern County cop testified that he found New York Life insurance paperwork in Limon's house, according to the [Desert Dispatch](#).

The hearing, scheduled to continue today, will determine whether there's enough evidence for the 37-year-old Limon to face trial for Robert's murder. Her husband's body was found with two bullets to the head in 2014. Last month, authorities cuffed Limon on a slew of charges, including murder, conspiracy, and solicitation to commit murder. Her arrest came days before Hearn's trial was scheduled to begin, and she was held on \$3 million bail.

Now she's facing life behind bars.

Limon pleaded not guilty one day after her paramedic paramour [accepted a plea](#) deal that landed him a 25-year sentence in exchange for testifying about their lethal love triangle, which began after they met at a Costco.

According to Hearn's testimony, he met Limon in 2012 when she worked at the retail outlet. Their friendship blossomed into a sexual relationship, and two years later, they were discussing their future together, the *Californian* reported.

But first they allegedly needed to get Robert out of the picture. "She said he would probably rather be dead than divorced," Hearn testified, later adding that he had the arsenic delivered to his grandparents' art studio.

Limon didn't look at Hearn during his testimony, and instead sat hunched over and with her head down throughout Tuesday's hearing, the *Californian* reported.

Prosecutors dropped the first-degree murder charge against Hearn, who instead pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in the cuckolded husband's death.

After the plea was announced, Hearn's attorney said it wasn't an easy decision for his client, the Victorville [Daily Press](#) reported. The ex-firefighter isn't "a cold-hearted, callous, evil man who has no conscience," Clayton Campbell told reporters at the time.

“His conscience has compelled him to make this plea bargain,” Campbell added. “It’s a very difficult decision for anyone to make, to accept that kind of time. But there are several factors that go into it, one of them being his conscience, which I believe is the driving force for him.”

The fireman’s plea revealed more about the twisted scheme, which left Robert’s then-11-year-old son and 8-year-old daughter without a dad.

Hearn allegedly copped to [the arsenic plot](#) and to purchasing the poison online months before Robert’s death for \$136.41 using an alias and a prepaid credit card. Police found the arsenic in a garage during their investigation, court papers state.

As part of their alleged plot, Limon gave Hearn details of Robert’s medical history, which included a rare condition that resulted in stomach issues and vomiting. The Tehachapi hospital, near Robert’s job at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway complex, would be too “disorganized” to detect arsenic trioxide in his system, Limon allegedly told Hearn.

Still, Limon and Hearn feared authorities would unearth the poison in Robert’s bloodstream and backed out, Hearn said. Before Robert could eat his tainted dessert, which contained his favorite Nilla wafers, Limon called him at work and told him to toss the pudding because it tasted strange, according to the [Californian](#).

Hearn also testified that the lovers also considered rubbing out Robert in a car accident or fire. They allegedly settled on targeting the hubby at his workplace in an industrial complex, and Limon gave Hearn specifics on her husband’s schedule.

In August 2014, Robert Limon was found shot to death at work—two days before his 14th wedding anniversary. At first, police suspected the 38-year-old railroad employee was the victim of a burglary gone wrong. Coworkers said they’d last seen Robert that fateful Sunday at 5 p.m., when he was working in the field. His body was discovered at 6:45 p.m. in a maintenance shop with two gunshots to the head. Robert’s employer, BNSF Railway, quickly offered a [\\$100,000 reward](#) for information on his death, while railroad workers distributed fliers seeking tips.

Robert’s slaying devastated those close to him, and colleagues working in the industrial complex feared they’d be targets, too.

As police looked for Robert’s killer, well-wishers showered Limon and her children with gifts. She thanked friends and family on social media for supporting her and the couple’s children following her husband’s death. “Through this pain and unbelievable tragedy, Robs [sic] love continues on. The love and kindness given back to me and OUR kids has been overwhelming,” she wrote [in a September Facebook post](#).

“We THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH for acts of random kindness that has been shown to us. Flowers. Gifts. Hugs. Food. All of the love love [sic] that has come to us has been such a BEAUTIFUL tribute to the AMAZING man Robert was and will never be forgotten.”

In the coming months, investigators would solidify their theory that Robert’s case was no fatal robbery or random act in the railyard.

They eyed the then-24-year-old fireman, whom they believed was having an affair with Robert’s wife, and said surveillance footage showed Hearn fleeing the scene minutes after Robert was gunned down. (When asked about the video, Hearn’s attorney told *Good Morning America*, “It’s not clear enough to really make out who the person is, you can’t even tell what race or whether it’s a male or female. It’s a person with a limp crossing the yard.”)

Police also pointed to cellphone records: Hearn and Limon talked for 80 minutes on the day of the murder, right after Robert left for work.

According to Tuesday’s hearing, detectives created a ruse so that Limon and Hearn would incriminate themselves, the *Californian* reported.

One investigator testified that he called Limon on Nov. 17, 2014, with false information about leads he was pursuing to catch her husband’s killer. Ten minutes later, Limon called Hearn concerned that cops were onto them.

During the wiretapped call, which was played for the court, the couple described hearing a clicking noise and pondered whether they were being recorded. “They might have nothing,” Hearn said in the call. “They might have everything.”

The next day, police arrested the couple on suspicion of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. But prosecutors did not file charges against Limon and released her, citing insufficient evidence.

Detectives believed Hearn was the triggerman, but needed more proof that Limon helped orchestrate her husband’s demise.

Ellie Chandler, a family friend, told the [Daily Press](#) that the Limons were an “all-American family” with two kids in elementary school.

“They were what everybody wanted to be; just a happy family that had everything,” she said after Limon’s and Hearn’s arrests that November. “That’s why I don’t understand it.... As far as I know, they had a great marriage. I did not suspect anything at all.”

“Everybody loved to be around [Sabrina],” Chandler added. “She was the life of the party. She had her group of friends that stayed with her every night to get her through this when Rob died. I’m just in shock.”

Months after Robert's death, Limon told detectives that she and her husband had a "semi-open relationship" and agreed that it was OK to have casual sex with other people, according to the *Californian*. But the wife and mother said she ended up falling for Hearn. "We got in deep," she told investigators.

Limon walked free for years as Hearn sat in jail awaiting trial. It was only last month that she was finally charged, following a 2.5-year investigation and Hearn's decision to testify against her.

Cops say that Robert was unaware of his wife's affair, but his close friends suspected something was amiss, the [\*San Bernardino County Sentinel\*](#) reported.

Robert's best friend provided investigators with a letter he received from Hearn, who allegedly apologized for using him to get close to Limon. "I showed such pride in not seeing my mistakes as having such horrible and dangerous consequences," Hearn wrote in the missive, according to the [\*Daily Press\*](#).

The friend and his wife—who were close to Robert and Sabrina—told police they felt "creepy" about Hearn's presence. Hearn was 14 years younger than Robert and 11 years younger than Sabrina, the pal noted, according to the *Sentinel*.

Robert's friend said that he confronted Hearn twice about his relationship with Limon and that Hearn became angry at his questions. The firefighter allegedly admitted only to kissing Limon once, the *Sentinel* reported.

Authorities said Hearn and Limon exchanged thousands of text messages prior to Robert's murder. One from Hearn suggested that if the railroad worker was gone, they could live their lives together, the [\*Californian\*](#) reported.

At a July 2015 preliminary hearing, Kern County prosecutors presented evidence that included photos, interviews, security footage, and recorded phone conversations between the philandering lovebirds.

"In the next 100 years you and I will be in eternity together and all this will seem like nothing," Hearn told Limon during one call. "And hopefully in two or three years all of this will be done and over with."

Robert's sister, Lydia Marrero, attended that court appearance and said Limon was nowhere to be found.

"I'm really upset that I was lied to by Sabrina," Marrero told the *Daily Press*. "I feel like she misled us—her family, her friends. I feel that she's being very spineless that she didn't show up here and just sent her attorney. She's ashamed and that's her own fault."