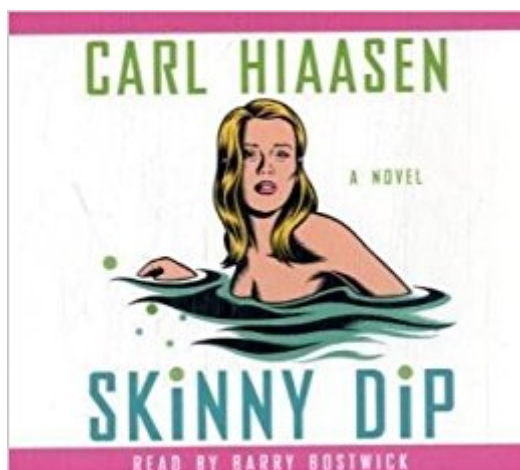


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Skinny Dip



Synopsis

Chaz Perrone might be the only marine scientist in the world who doesn't know which way the Gulf Stream runs. He might also be the only one who went into biology just to make a killing, and now he's found a way to doctoring water samples so that a ruthless agribusiness tycoon can continue illegally dumping fertilizer into the endangered Everglades. When Chaz suspects that his wife, Joey, has figured out his scam, he pushes her overboard from a cruise liner into the night-dark Atlantic. Unfortunately for Chaz, his wife doesn't die in the fall. Clinging blindly to a bale of Jamaican pot, Joey Perrone is plucked from the ocean by former cop and current loner Mick Stranahan. Instead of rushing to the police and reporting her husband's crime, Joey decides to stay dead and (with Mick's help) screw with Chaz until he screws himself. As Joey haunts and taunts her homicidal husband, as Chaz's cold-blooded cohorts in pollution grow uneasy about his ineptitude and increasingly erratic behavior, as Mick Stranahan discovers that six failed marriages and years of island solitude haven't killed the reckless romantic in him, we're taken on a hilarious, full-throttle, pure Hiaasen ride through the warped politics and mayhem of the human environment, and the human heart.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Random House Audio; Abridged edition (May 3, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0739320874

ISBN-13: 978-0739320877

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.1 x 5.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 757 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #383,895 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in [Books > Books on CD > Humor](#) #143 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Lawyers & Criminals](#) #401 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Humor & Satire > Dark Humor](#)

Customer Reviews

Charles "Chaz" Perrone fancies himself a take-charge kind of guy. So when this "biologist by default" suspects that his curvaceous wife, Joey, has stumbled onto a profitable pollution scam he's running on behalf of Florida agribusiness mogul Red Hammernut, he sets out right away to solve the problem--by heaving Joey off the deck of a luxury cruise liner and into the Atlantic Ocean, far

from Key West. But--whoops!--Joey, a former swimming champ, doesn't drown. Instead, as Carl Hiaasen tells in his 10th adult novel, *Skinny Dip*, she makes her way back to shore, thanks both to a wayward bale of Jamaican marijuana and lonerish ex-cop Mick Stranahan (*Skin Tight*, 1989), and then launches a bogus blackmail campaign that's guaranteed to drive her lazy, libidinous hubby into a self-protective frenzy. You've got to hand it to Hiaasen: He's perfected a formula for crisply written, satirical crime fiction that makes the best use of imaginatively repulsive villains, as well as less thoroughly venal scoundrels and victims who ultimately overcome their antagonists, all while stumping for the preservation of Florida's environment, particularly the Everglades. In *Skinny Dip*, we find Chaz (who'd rather be golfing than puttering around the "hot, buggy, funky-smelling and treacherous" reaches of nature) falsifying water samples to help Hammernut turn the 'Glades into "God's septic tank." That scheme, though, is endangered not just by Joey's sudden disappearance, but by the suspicions of a python-loving police detective and Chaz's own outstanding inability to tame his Viagra-enhanced tumescence. Even by assigning Chaz a baby-sitter--the hulking, hirsute, and painkiller-addicted Tool--Hammernut can't keep his pet biologist out of trouble. As Joey and Stranahan unfold their revenge plot, and Tool's conscience grows in competition with Chaz's ego, the reader can only marvel at the extent of the train wreck ahead. As much fun as Hiaasen has delivering Chaz his climactic comeuppance, what's missing from *Skinny Dip* is a more complex, more credible development of Mick Stranahan's character and the relationship he builds with the much younger Joey Perrone. Like Erin Grant, from *Strip Tease*, Joey has far more going for her than her bra-cup size; but "hero" Stranahan is of far less interest here than any of his fellow players. --J. Kingston Pierce --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hiaasen's signature mix of hilariously over-the-top villains, lovable innocents and righteous indignation at what mankind has done to his beloved Florida wilderness is all present in riotous abundance in his latest. It begins with attractive heiress Joey Perrone being tossed overboard from a cruise ship by her larcenous husband, Chaz--not for her money, which she has had the good sense to keep well away from him, but because he fears she is onto his crooked dealings with a ruthless tycoon who is poisoning the Everglades. But instead of drowning as she's supposed to, Joey stays afloat until she is rescued by moody ex-cop Mick Stranahan, a loner who has also struck out in the marriage department. Then the two together, with the unwitting aid of a suspicious cop who can't pin the attempted murder on Chaz, hatch a sadistic plot to scare that "maggot" out of what little wit he has. Even Tool, a hulking brute sent by the tycoon to keep an eye on Chaz, eventually

turns against him, and much of the fun is in watching the deplorable Chaz flounder further and further in the murk, both literally and figuratively (Chaz's job, as the world's unlikeliest marine biologist, involves falsifying water pollution levels for the tycoon). Hiaasen's books are so enjoyable it's always a sad moment when they end. In this case, however, sadness is mixed with puzzlement because the book seems to end in mid-scene, with Chaz in trouble again— but is it terminal? We thought at first there were some pages missing, but Knopf says that was the ending Hiaasen intended. Odd. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

My second Hiaasen book, and it was also great fun to read (Bad Monkey being my first). This is a comedy wrapped around a mystery/suspense story. Man thinks he kills wife, she survives and instead of going to the police decides to drive him insane. A cast of memorable characters, including an island living ex-cop, a Minnesotan cop who can't wait to leave Florida for the peace and quiet of the north country, and a Grade-a, obnoxious SOB husband who thinks for a while he has pulled off the perfect crime. There is even an oafish mobster who becomes part of a redemption story. Hiaasen is a great diversion, mind candy for those who like to laugh and be entertained. He reminds me of a sophomore who learned to write very well - the characters and plot lines would make any high-schooler giggle, but he weaves his tale together well in a sophisticated manner.

Do not read this book at night next to your sleeping husband...I kept waking him up laughing out loud. I don't want to give any plot away, so I will be careful here. Let's just say that this book is a typical but exceptional hilarious Hiaasen tale where everything goes wrong. The characters include science challenged biologist Chaz, and his wonderful, rich wife Joey (who he throws off of a cruise ship on page one.) There is also an ex-policeman living on an island, a wild hairdresser with some interesting quirks, a behemoth bodyguard with so much body hair he was once shot because he was mistaken for a bear, a sleazy corporate bad guy, and a Vietnam vet who mistakes the people he meets for famous persons. Oh, and a detective who has two giant pythons. Yes, this is a typical Hiaasen romp. And a good one. Highly highly recommended. (Just not around anyone trying to sleep!)

When it comes to Carl Hiaasen, either you love him or you don't. He has a style that takes no prisoners. There is no question how he feels about urban sprawl. He has watched Florida, as have I, ruined by over development and greed. If you look at an empty natural area and fantasize about

condos and the money that could be made through development you will hate ALL of Carl's books. Also, I'm pretty sure the people who complain about the plausibility of his characters aren't very familiar with Florida. Yes, America, imagine it and you will find it in Florida. Carl knows Florida like the back of his hand. I immensely enjoyed this book. The story made me laugh out loud and cheer as the bad guys got theirs in that oh so gratifying Hiassen manner. If Carl Hiassen is the master of anything, he's the master of satiric tales with painful realities we don't want to face about ourselves that bear out the timeless truth: "You reap what you sow."

I found this book to be a good page turner, and a particularly good read for a plane flight from Tampa to Boston. I appreciated the Floridian landscape. The idea was fun -- who doesn't love a vengeance story? -- but ultimately, the characters had a kind of police-procedural flatness. and by "police procedural," I mean "Law and Order," not "The Killing." Although the details of how weren't absolutely apparent, you knew what was going to happen pretty early. Joey Perrone would destroy her would-be murderer of a husband. Along the way, she'd hook up with the man who saved her, a kindly but humble accomplice who happens to inhabit his own private island (but who is neither rich nor evil), and she'd spend lots of money on replacing her wardrobe. Don't think too deeply about the plausibility of this plot! Enjoyable, but not memorable.

I really liked this book - The story line developed quickly and easily and was a very fun, easy read...The Characters are very detailed in a quirky, silly, kinda weird way!! loved Chaz - could picture the exact kind of guy he was...all about himself - all about putting his needs first - and reading his slow decent into Hell was hilarious...I loved Joey and Mick - honestly I wanted to know more about them - more about them together - I love when Joey thinks about having slept with Mick..."While Mick wasn't as robotically durable as her husband (Chaz), he was far more attentive, tender and enterprising...With Mick, she was an actual participant; a lover." As a reader, I wanted to know a little bit more about their love together and how it would blossom - but with that said, I understand that the entire book takes place over a 2 week time frame and that would almost be impossible to accomplish in that short time. I loved how the author left some of the smaller story lines open to the reader's conclusion - I am not one who wants EVERYTHING wrapped up with a tight bow by the end of the book so this worked for me. However, the main character, Chaz, and his final demise or bleak future should have been detailed a little more and brought to a tight conclusion, I felt. Overall this was a very enjoyable read - Thank you Carl Hiassen for this super great story.

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