



Lucky You

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A native of Florida, Carl Hiaasen has made a career of delving into the absurd goings-on that seem to be commonplace in the tropical world of Florida. Since 1976, Hiaasen has worked for THE MIAMI HERALD as an investigative reporter and, more recently, as a columnist. He is also the author of a number of wildly funny satires, including TOURIST SEASON (1986), NATIVE TONGUE (1991), STRIP TEASE (1993), and STORMY WEATHER (1995). As someone who cares very deeply about the fate of Florida, Hiaasen has employed satire on such targets as corrupt public officials, greedy businessmen, and thoughtless tourists.

LUCKY YOU is set in the small town of Grange, Florida. It has become famous for its fiberglass Madonna that sheds tears and a road-stain that resembles the face of Jesus. The protagonist of the novel is JoLayne Lucks, a black veterinary assistant who resides in Grange. For several years, she has played the Florida lottery using the same six numbers. These numbers (17, 19, 22, 24, 27, and 30) represent how old she was when she ended each of her six love affairs. Although leery of men, Lucks is generally happy and has visions of doing her part to save the local environment. She would like to purchase a wilderness area in order to protect it from being ruined by developers. Her luck takes a definite turn for the better when she discovers that she is holding the winning lottery ticket worth twenty-eight million dollars. Since another winning ticket also was purchased, Lucks share would be fourteen million. The other ticket belongs to two neo-Nazi psychopaths who decide that they do not want to share the twenty-eight million with anyone. Bodean Gazzer and his friend Chub want the money in order to form their own militia group. Since one of the winning tickets was purchased by a black woman, these white supremacists know that they must steal the ticket from her.

After being brutalized and robbed of her ticket by these psychopaths, Lucks teams up with a sympathetic reporter—Tom Krome—and hunts down Gazzer and Chub in order to get her ticket back. As written by Hiaasen, the chase is filled with bizarre situations at every turn. A whole cast of crazy characters fill up the landscape. For all of the potential danger, the terror comes across as more darkly humorous than anything else. The psychopaths are tracked down and made to suffer for their crimes. The chase brings Lucks and Krome closer together, and a significant relationship may develop. As is all Hiaasen novels, some of the most fun is had with the various subplots that are intermingled throughout. LUCKY YOU crackles with eccentricity. Almost always hilarious, the novel is sure to please Hiaasen's already large legion of fans.

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