



# Air Dance Iguana

*Tom Corcoran*

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## **Air Dance Iguana** Tom Corcoran

Lately, Key West is not quite the laid back place that occasional freelance crime-scene-photographer Alex Rutledge prefers. It's bad enough that the discovery of two dead ex-Navy men one morning--both found swinging on boat lifts twenty miles apart--means grisly work at the indecent hour of 7AM. It's worse that Alex's run-in with a chest-thumping new deputy turns out to have ominous consequences when his wayward younger brother turns up in town...and becomes the prime suspect.

Alex knows Tim has messed up his life, but he just can't believe his brother is a killer. As Alex digs deeper, he starts to make connections the cops have missed--but he's baffled when he finds one of the deceased owns a picture of a young girl who turned to Alex for help many years ago. And when a third man is found swinging on the docks, he knows time is running out for his brother. But what he doesn't know is that facing the killer may turn out to be the least of his problems...

## **Air Dance Iguana Details**

Date : Published October 31st 2006 by St. Martin's Paperbacks (first published November 2005)

ISBN : 9780312941895

Author : Tom Corcoran

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## **From Reader Review Air Dance Iguana for online ebook**

### **Michael says**

Entertaining enough, Corcoran's prose is sometimes stiff and the dialog clanks as often as it chimes. Very good at creating characters, even the minor ones, and the plot only, occasionally, seemed silly and contrived. He certainly knows Key West. A little too well, sometimes. I didn't really need detailed descriptions of highways and byways.

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### **Rebekkila says**

I would be interested in reading more of this series. I kind of had some of the mystery figured out half way through so it was good that he threw some twists in there to keep me reading. The whole story took place in the Florida Keys and at times it felt like he was writing just for the residents of that area, but I got it...I used to live in a tourist area myself and understood where he was coming from.

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### **Patricia says**

Keys craziness with hometown feel brings back the past amid the bustling tourist life.

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### **Maurean says**

Tis was an entertaining enough cozy mystery. Set in the Florida Keys, this is the 5th installement of the "Alex Rutledge" mysteries, but my first foray into Corcoran's work; this was an enjoyable yarn, with a well told plot and a great sense of place - I'll read others in this series if I find an opportunity.

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### **Jan Norton says**

Found the book an okay read. It came in a box that was given to me. I decided to read it because it is set in Florida where I live.

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### **Phil says**

A photographer turned crime scene photo shoot? Well anything is possible in the Key West. Throw in a laid back Sheriff, a brother who lives a life of crime and the Navy and you get a somewhat good story. Not difficult to pick out the bad dude or dudes in this ok read.

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### **Holly says**

A great novel with the South Florida/Keys vibe that kept me reading. It was similar to a Hiaasen book.

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### **Susan says**

fun read

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### **Jim says**

Fun mystery to read, especially after finishing "Mile Marker Zero". Matching the scenes in the book to Key West, and then real Key West history from "Mile Marker Zero" to the scenes & events from Air Dance Iguana. Can't wait to read more of his books...

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### **Veronica says**

I really liked it. Very entertaining.

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### **Jenny says**

Registered on Bookcrossing - <http://www.bookcrossing.com/journal/1...>

Another great book in the Alex Rutledge mystery series. I love this series and now I want to live in Key West.

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### **Todd Stockslager says**

Corcoran brings back Key West freelance photographer Alex Rutledge for his fifth turn as an accidental private investigator. His listening and observation skills honed in living on the keys for several decades provide him with an ability and aptitude for curiosity that well suits him for his amateur pursuit. (If this paragraph sounds familiar, see my review of Backstabber: A Hitchcock Sewell Mystery by Tim Cockey, which I read just before this and found strikingly similar in style and series cadence).

In this outing Rutledge is bedeviled by his ne'er-do-well brother, who ends up accused of a pair of revenge hangings, shortly before a third raises our hero's question--answered by his intrepid newspaper report/friend--of how long its been since there were any such gruesome murders in Paradise. Rutledge scents out odd reactions among local law enforcement, and in his laid-back Island style ends up putting himself in danger's way several times, and ends up solving the case, but not before one last imbroglio that nearly leaves him, well, hanging.

I've never been to Key West except in a Jimmy Buffett song, but Corcoran's word pictures evoke both its awe and awfulness through the lens of a long time resident. Iguana is fun, fast, and as comfortable as a blown-out flipflop.

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### **John Smith says**

The most horrible book I've read in a long time. The author is obsessed with painting a picture that doesn't need to be painted. The book moves at a snail's pace, by the time the action rolled around (page 250 of 280ish), I was so over the book I was skimming.

There are too many characters and every single one of them is unlikable. The protagonist is a smug, pretentious photographer who just so happens to be the smartest person on Key West. Oh and every cop is a bumbling moron. 1/10.

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### **LJ says**

AIR DANCE IGUANA (Amateur Sleuth-Florida Keys-Cont) – Ok

Corcoran, Tom – 5th in series

St. Martin's Minotaur, 2005- Paperback

\*\*\* Florida Keys resident Alex Rutledge is a photographer and, lately, a police photographer. There hasn't been a hanging on the Keys in thirty years and, suddenly, there are two and maybe three. The odd thing is that Alex, rather than a policeman, was the only one at all three crime scenes and he's having a hard time convincing the police the three crimes are not suicide and are related. His problems increase when his older brother, who looks almost like Alex but has a less than clean record, comes to town and becomes a suspect. \*\*\* I enjoyed the setting of the Florida Keys and, to me, it was one of the most interesting parts of the book. The plot was improbable that, even with so many jurisdictions, the police work could be that sloppy and that Alex could come up with information and connections the police couldn't. But that's my problem with most stories whose protagonists are amateur sleuths. Still, I enjoyed the characters, the dialogue and the setting. It wasn't a great book, but it was an okay read.

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### **Sandie Herron says**

AIR DANCE IGUANA, By Tom Corcoran

Photographer Alex Rutledge thinks he's finally going to have some down time. He's rented his house on Key West to a friend and will house sit at another where he'll have peace and quiet and can kayak all he wants. The problem is that the night before he's due to leave, the phone rings in the middle of the night bringing trouble. Alex's brother Tim is in town, drunk, and unruly. The cops are doing Alex a favor by letting him pick him up rather than throwing him in jail. Eight years earlier Alex had kicked Tim out of Key West for all the trouble and people he'd pissed off. Now Tim has a roommate who drinks just as much and isn't much better off than Tim.

In the meantime, Rutledge is called to photograph a crime scene: a man known as Kansas Jack is hanging

from a davit. As soon as he finishes, Sheriff “Chicken Neck” Liska sends Alex with another cop to another scene miles north where a man known as Milton Navarre is also found hanging from a davit. This scene is supervised by Detective Millican who doesn’t want a civilian on his crime scene, yet he allows Rutledge enough access to give Liska what he wants: a feel for the crime scene. The only difference Rutledge notices are that the noose knots are reversed from each other.

I appreciated Tom Corcoran taking a moment here to describe how everyone on Key West gets a nickname. For instance, with the two men hanging and known by their nicknames, Corcoran easily works in their origins and importance.

In Kansas Jack’s meager possessions is a photo of Pokey Fields, daughter of Horace “Weedy” Fields who sold Alex his home on Dredger Lane years ago. Pokey was standing in front of Alex’s home, so why would Kansas Jack have it? Another clue is a silver Zippo lighter with the date 1/12/73, Nevada, R.I. and four sets of initials.

In a strangely unusual way Sheriff Liska is nervous. Liska is not suspicious, not angry, not sluggish or depressed, but his voice quivers with anxiety. He really doesn’t want Alex to leave on vacation and deal with these murders away from the scenes. He even asks Alex to be his eyes and ears, on the payroll no less.

Alex declines, and as he drives to his new digs on Little Torch Key, he literally drives by an accident and is waved down the road by a deputy. Yet one more body hung from a davit. The rope was not knotted to a true noose. Lucky Haskins was not lucky hanging from his davit. Alex is even more curious when a new detective shows up at the scene, hired just that week. What was up with Liska that he didn’t want to be involved with these crime scenes?

Later the next day Detective Millican drove up to Alex’s temporary home and tried to beat answers out of him. Seems there was some funny credit card shenanigans at a gas station a couple of nights ago caught on tape, but it was Tim not Alex, who did the dirty work. Millican wouldn’t buy it, and in questioning Alex cuffed in the backseat of his car, Millican causes an accident.

Alex was bruised pretty badly and put up in a local hotel rather than the hospital at his insistence until he could heal enough to return home to climb the steps on the Little Torch Key residence. When he was well enough to wander out of his room, he found an open air bar with the widow Haskins drunk as a skunk who was then escorted home by a “sportman.”

His current girlfriend and cop Bobbi Lewis and Alex seem to mix their professional and personal lives fairly well, but even that was tenuous right now. Alex ends up dealing with several of his past girlfriends in this volume, sometimes all at once along with his best friend Sam’s live in mate, Marnie, who is a reporter. There is no time for it to feel awkward because by then, they have solved the mystery of the davit hangings and the lighter with the initials and are covering each other’s backs.

This book only covers one case yet it is multi-faceted with several deaths connected to it. Many people are involved from years past with the hopes that those facts would stay buried in the past, yet they are bubbling back up all around Key West right now. The book is intricate with many clues and twists turning over each other and tying one to the next. Rutledge takes us along with him every step of the way explaining each clue as it is revealed to him.

I especially enjoyed the ride as one clue revealed the next and that revealed the next and so on until the ultimate conclusion is reached, one I never expected yet one that made perfect sense.

This book truly represents a big step forward in Tom Corcoran's writing. The book is tighter, better, and more complex. I hope Alex continues his Key West antics but finally gets that rest and relaxation he so deserves.

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