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Iron Lake: Cork O'Connor, Book 1



Synopsis

William Kent Krueger joined the ranks of today's best suspense novelists with this thrilling, universally acclaimed debut. Conjuring "a sense of place he's plainly honed firsthand in below-zero prairie" (Kirkus Reviews), Krueger brilliantly evokes northern Minnesota's lake country -- and reveals the dark side of its snow-covered landscape. Part Irish, part Anishinaabe Indian, Corcoran "Cork" O'Connor is the former sheriff of Aurora, Minnesota. Embittered by his "former" status, and the marital meltdown that has separated him from his children, Cork gets by on heavy doses of caffeine, nicotine, and guilt. Once a cop on Chicago's South Side, there's not much that can shock him. But when the town's judge is brutally murdered, and a young Eagle Scout is reported missing, Cork takes on a mind-jolting case of conspiracy, corruption, and scandal. As a lakeside blizzard buries Aurora, Cork must dig out the truth among town officials who seem dead-set on stopping his investigation in its tracks. But even Cork freezes up when faced with the harshest enemy of all: a small-town secret that hits painfully close to home. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

I have to jump on the O'Connor band wagon. This was a great one. Couldn't put it down. Krueger has proven he can compete with the big boys. This takes place in a small Minnesota town on the fringe of a reservation. Cork is trying to get over losing his job as sheriff. Some strange murders are happening in Aurora and he is lured to the investigation. In the mean time, he is also trying to figure

out his personal life. He is attracted to a younger woman but is also trying to figure out what to do with his crumbling marriage. I liked the way Krueger developed the characters while keeping the reader hooked on the mystery. Not many authors have mastered this. Krueger is working on becoming the master...

In Aurora, Minnesota in the winter, there are as many people who travel by skis and snowmobiles as by cars. Judge Robert Parrent is found dead, a possible suicide. The newspaper delivery boy, Paul LeBeau, is missing. All of Paul's deliveries were made up to the Judge's house. Cork O'Connor, once a cop in Chicago and former sheriff in Aurora, feels compelled to take action where there's a need to solve a crime. Cork is undergoing a time of turmoil, himself. His wife, Jo, wants a divorce and he's separated from his three children; painful indeed, just as the Christmas season is upon him. He takes emotional refuge with Molly Nurmi, a kindly waitress at the local coffee shop. One winter day, he gives a ride to an old Indian wise-man, Henry Meloux, who tells him that the Windigo has called Harlan Lytton's name. This is an Indian sign of a person's imminent death. When Cork goes to Harlan's home to warn him, he's attacked by Harlan's dog and is forced to kill it. Not long after, Harlan is found dead and it is learned that he has been spying on the residents and more. Cork doesn't believe that the Judge committed suicide. He thinks the Judge had something that the killer was after. Cork also learns things about his own family that shakes his well being. I enjoyed Cork as a character. He shows that he is human and yet has the inner strength to continue the investigation while pondering his own faith and his relationship with his children. This is while he is having personal issues at the same time. This is a fine debut novel which won the Anthony Award. The author can certainly tell a captivating story full of memorable characters, set in the frozen countryside of Minnesota. With his use of Indian folk lore, he places himself as a successor to the legendary Tony Hillerman.

You gotta love Cork O'Connor. He has lost his job, separated from his wife and now lives in the back of his little business. But he chooses good women, loves his kids and has a good heart. Now he will put everything on the line to deal with murder and an old Indian legend. I love series characters - it's fun to follow their progression from one book to another and this promises to be a top notch series. If you like Harry Bosch, Tres Navarre, or Kevin Kearney you will enjoy Cork O'Connor.

If you like James Lee Burke and Tony Hillerman, you will find "Iron Lake" to your liking. Deeply

intricate plot, good local color, plot twists and good characterization. Add Cork O'Connor to your list of favorite characters along side of Dave Robichaux, Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn.

The murder?/suicide? of a corrupt judge in far northern Aurora Minnesota sets the momentum of this well written first novel. The mysteries pile up, a whiteout type blizzard sets in, the Windigo is afoot, and a crackerjack story ensues. The central character, Cork O'Conner is a straightforward man beset by complexities. He was fired from his post as sheriff and, wonder of wonders, deserved it. The usual mystery ploy is the hero was wrongfully used and was in fact a total hero, if only he had been understood. Cork is invested with real human frailties. His marriage is spiraling toward a divorce, and he can't get a handle on what to do about it. The sheriff who took his place, far from being an illiterate, crooked nincompoop, is actually a competent, honest man-much to Cork's discomfort. The story is well paced with excellent plotting and characterization. The interplay between the characters, both verbally and emotionally, is exceptionally strong. There is a whiff of the supernatural (see Windigo above) that the author lightly touches upon and leaves to the reader whether to accept or not. What is extremely encouraging that as strong a book as "Iron Lake" is, I feel his latest, "Boundary Waters" is even better. Mr. Krueger is an evolving author in the best sense. This highly enjoyable book is highly recommended.

When a prominent and infamous man-about-town is found dead and a local Native American boy turns up missing, suspects, alibis, and racial tensions pile up as high as snow banks. Cork probably shouldn't get involved. The last time he stepped in the middle, people got hurt. Himself included. And now he's lost his badge and his wife and maybe his way. But whether he likes it or not, he's caught again, like his blood, like his past, half in the white man's world, half on the reservation. Now a man is dead and a boy is missing and it's snowing really hard outside. And Cork's sense of duty and justice didn't disappear with his badge. Krueger's ability to marry true edge-of-your-seat mystery and suspense with a lyrical and literary style and sensibility is unmatched. Iron Lake succeeds famously both as a tale of murder and mystery and as a rich and vivid portrait of an unusual town and its divided citizens. Read this book. It's fantastic.

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