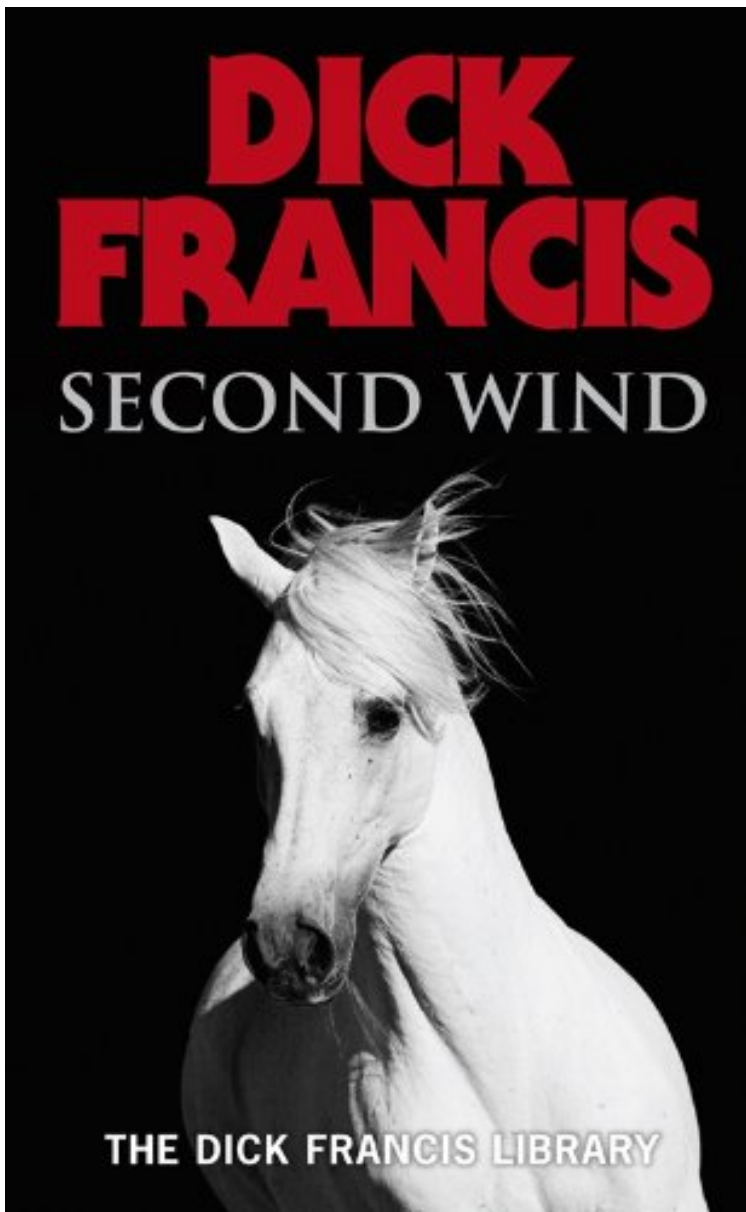


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## Second Wind



*Par Dick Francis*  
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**Par Dick Francis : Second Wind**  
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**Description :** Description du produitWhen a hurricane-chasing plane is downed on a Caribbean island, TV meteorologist Perry Stuart barely escapes with his life. But he can't escape what he saw on the island--and if the people who've tracked him back to England have their way, Stuart will have a zero percent chance of survival.

Prsentation de l'diteurPerry Stuart, TV meteorologist, chiefly predicts periods of English drizzle, with bursts of heavier rain and sunshine to follow. His life calm and ordered, his face familiar to every British household, Stuart's profound weather knowledge and accuracy have given him high status among forecasters, but no physical baptism by storm.Not, that is, until a fellow forecaster offers him a Caribbean

hurricane-chasing ride in a small aeroplane as a holiday diversion. By frightening accident, Stuart learns more secrets from the flight than wind speeds and back home in England he faces threats and danger as deadly as anything that nature can evolve. Second; Wind is a twisting spiralling hurricane of a thriller that will defy anyone to treat the weather as an everyday topic of conversation..com Dick Francis's legion of admirers can relax: his year off from writing since the 1998 publication of Field of Thirteen is over, and a new vigor has entered his style. Longtime readers will be happy to find the customary racetrack skullduggery, galvanized by some fascinating new elements. The very opening of Second Wind signals something new, with Francis's protagonist, meteorologist Perry Stuart, fighting for his life as he flies through the eye of storm on Trox Island, a blighted place steeped in guano and harboring a nasty secret. "But now, as near dead as dammit, I tumbled like a rag-doll piece of flotsam in towering gale-driven seas that sucked unimaginable tons of water from the deeps ...." When the reader encountered details of the racing world in Francis's earlier thrillers such as Whip Hand and Reflex, they had the satisfying ring of authenticity. The same is true in Second Wind--Stuart's character was developed with the help of BBC weatherman John Kettle. Although this is a new venue for Francis, he still has a knack for quickening the reader's pulse with a few carefully chosen words: "Despair was too strong a word for it. Perhaps despondency was better. When they came for me, they came with guns." --Barry Forshaw From Publishers Weekly With his 40th novel in as many years, grand master Dick Francis isn't up to his usual high standards, but fans know that even a subpar Francis is in the 95th percentile. Here the typical Francis hero is a young Englishman of a vanishing breed: smart, self-effacing although very good at his job, polite and thoroughly decent. Perry Stuart is a well-known TV weatherman for the BBC who was orphaned as a child and raised by his beloved, now crippled grandmother, who remains tartly sensible ("If you can't fix it, think about something else"). Joining fellow BBC weatherman Kris Ironside on a flying jaunt into the eye of a Caribbean hurricane, Perry survives when the plane crashes and washes up on a tiny, apparently abandoned island where the houses were destroyed by the hurricane. In a hut, he stumbles across a safe containing a mysterious file folder whose contents he cannot decipher. After a crew wearing radiation-protection suits arrive by air to rescue him, Perry's troubles are only beginning, as he slowly becomes aware of a sinister scheme in which well-off people are brokering enriched uranium to foreign nogoodniks. Among the cast are mushroom mogul Robin Darcy and his flashy American wife, two old SIS spooks A think an aging James Bond and a tottery MA and a beautiful nurse who is Perry's circumspect love interest. Perry continues to encounter danger: the sabotage of another plane he's on, threats by a muscle-bound thug in Grand Cayman. Francis's writing is smooth and intelligent, moving the reader right along, but the end of the book is more than a tad far-fetched. Still, ex-RAF pilot and champion steeplechaser Francis knows his stuff A and of course race courses figure in the plot. BOMC main selection; Audio Books main selection; 3-city author tour. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.