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Bonecrack



Synopsis

In the middle of the night, two masked men break into Neil Griffon's home and abduct him. He quickly discovers that unless he agrees to their unreasonable demands, they will destroy his father's precious horses and racing stable and, ultimately, Neil himself. Returned to his father's stables, he must find a way to bring down these criminals. Because having to choose between his integrity and his life is no choice at all | --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Authors, A-Z > (F) > Francis, Dick #11956 in Books > Books on CD > General #19883

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Customer Reviews

After reading UNDER ORDERS recently decided to re-read some of Dick Francis' older material, and this 1971 release seemed a good one with which start. There are many problems in Newmarket at Rowley Lodge stables, main one being that Neil Griffon's father, the stable's owner, is hospitalized with a broken leg and temporarily cannot run the stables. Neil takes upon himself to pinch hit, and since Neil and his father have never gotten along at all, his father does not like it one bit. But Neil carries on slowly winning everyone but his father over. Added to this is another very mentally disturbed father who through threats of violence forces his son on Neil as apprentice jockey; with some of the threats having already been carried out. The plot runs very smoothly, and though there are a few very close calls with violence, it eventually reaches a very satisfactory end. The conflict between two sets of fathers and sons offers interesting reading, with the two sons eventually understanding more than either father ever did or could. Thought provoking, indeed. This book is tightly written with very interesting, believable characters who act and speak as they should.

The focus is very much on horses in stable with some insight also offered into just how they are trained and entered into races. It is one of the more enjoyable books from Dick Francis I've read viewing racing from not only from the owner's point of view, but the trainer and the jockeys, as well. And now that most of his earlier books have been reissued by Berkley in new printings with very colorful cover paintings, the entire package is not only refreshing but worth the time spent. Recommended. Semper Fi.

The beginning and ending of the story by Dick Francis is always heart touching. This is no exception. This is the story about father and son. Father is dictatorial and difficult to communicate with Son. This applies both Neil and Alessandro. Alessandro's father is Enso Rivera who is a crook and Neil's father is the owner of one of the prosperous racing stables. Neil is abducted and demanded to let Alessandro to ride on Archangel which is the most popular horse for the Derby. After he was released, Alessandro was sent to his father's stable which Neil runs temporarily because his father is in hospital. Alessandro is arrogant and bullish like his father, but gradually changes himself owing to Neil's delicate technique. Neil is in danger to break his color bone. The nearer the Derby is coming, the more dangerous Enso becomes but Neil's determination is solid. Toward the end, Alessandro was put into a dangerous spot and unexpected ending is the most exciting and heart warming.

This is a story of two father-son couples; the hero who is temporary in charge of a training stable and his cold-hearted father, and a spoiled son who wants to be a champion jockey and his fanatic, ruthless father. Their unhappy relationship is lightly and smoothly described in the fast-paced, thrilling story, yet I am strongly impressed by the relationship. Francis is really a good writer. And it is also interesting that a daily life of a training stable is vividly described.

If you thought I'd be prejudiced in favor of Dick Francis just because I've read 32 of his books, you may just possibly be right. Fortunately, I have 13 more that I haven't read yet, so I still have a tiny bit of room to change my mind. Right now, I hold Dick Francis consistently to be the best mystery writer I have ever read. And I do love writers like John Sandford, Lee Child, Michael Connelly, Jeff Abbott, William Berhardt, Linwood Barclay and others of that caliber. Bonecrack is just another one of his amazing list of exceptional books that stand head and shoulders above many of those other masters of mystery. Writers like Jack Higgins and to a certain extent Lee Child seem to write variations of the same book over and over again. Not so Dick Francis. Even though each of his books has a thread running through it that invariably involves horse racing that commonality is much

more like the fact that Alfred Hitchcock always made an appearance in each of his films. Each of Francis' protagonists are unique. His characters are clad in flesh and blood so they come alive on the page and have meaningful relationships. Francis' scenarios seem lifted from real life and involve the reader emotionally. There is little detail that isn't relevant and Francis does not waste time with pages of description of clothing, landscapes, or mechanical intricacies designed to let you know how much Francis knows about nuclear submarines, botany, small arms, fighter jet cockpits, or international investment. You won't miss it, either here in Bonecrack or any of his other books. Read Bonecrack or any other Dick Francis book and I think you could become the same kind of Francis addict I am. Since his death, his son Felix, who co-wrote with his father during his later years, now writes under his own name as part of a "Dick Francis brand franchise." His books are much like his father's, who obviously taught him well, so I'm pleased to recommend him too. Happy reading.

Bonecrack was first published in 1971, so it has been around for a while. It is a Dick Francis novel, through and through. Newmarket and the horse racing culture. Trainers and owners. Heroes and villains, with the heroes being all too human. A mysterious villain insists that his son be given the top jockey spot in an important race, over all the other jockeys and with no experience. Failure to submit to his demands will have fatal consequences for horses and their riders. Neil Griffon must save the stables from financial mismanagement, protect his horses and riders, and... learn to be a trainer. You see, he's never done this before, but circumstances have placed him in this precarious position. If you like fast-moving mysteries, you will like Bonecrack.

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