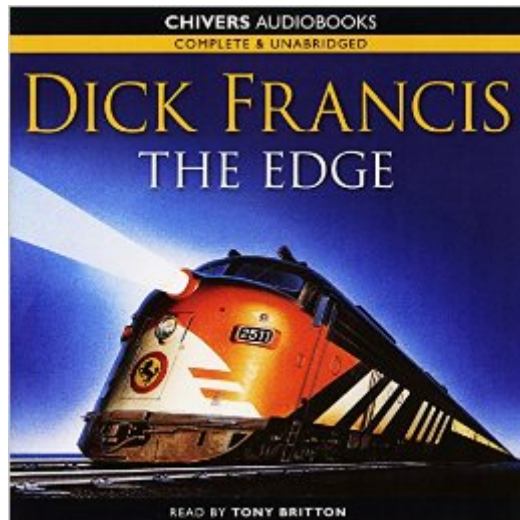


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Come To Grief: By Dick Francis (Unabridged Audiobook 10cds)



Synopsis

Sid Halley, the ex-champion jockey turned investigator who appears in *Odds Against* and *Whip Hand*, is back and facing new dilemmas and dangers. The opening finds him having uncovered an obnoxious crime committed by a friend whom he, and everyone else, has held in affection bordering on love. On the morning set for the opening of the friend's trial, at which Sid is due to be called as a witness, other people's miseries explode and send him spinning into pulverizing days of hard, rational detection, and heart-searching torments. Troubled, courageous, and unwilling to admit defeat, for Sid Halley it is business as usual.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: BBC Audiobooks/Chivers (2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1408478870

ISBN-13: 978-1408478875

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (57 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,708,266 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in [Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > \(F \) > Francis, Dick](#)

Customer Reviews

Francis addicts will cheer on "friend" Sid Halley as he faces old ghosts (first wife), old demons (as in *WHIP HAND*), and new demons (his friend & that of a little girl's fatal disease). The best part of any Dick Francis book are his characters. You always LIKE them. The action keeps you turning the pages, but the characters have you on their side cheering for them. *COME TO GRIEF* is no different. There are mixed feelings at the end of every Dick Francis book: good, the character is OK; and nuts, now the character is gone away because the book is finished. It has been nice to welcome back Sid Halley for the third time.

Dick Francis wrote only three books about Sid Halley, a former jockey turned investigator, and in each book, Sid and his views about his crippling injury change just a little. In *COME TO GRIEF*, Francis tells us right up front who the villain is, a "least likely" suspect indeed. Ellis Quint is a former champion amateur jockey, a friend and rival to Sid in his halcyon days, and a man who has gone on to outstanding success as a TV commentator and talk show host. So why would such a man stoop to crippling ponies and racehorses by chopping off their feet? It's a mesmerizing picture: Sid

reluctantly investigating and Ellis going to the brink, both men sharing a nature that loves and craves risk. Francis points this up in the character of Jonathan, a bored almost-delinquent, who got into trouble with his friends for stealing a car. Jonathan at this point could go either way: full fledged criminal or hot-shot investigator. As in all Dick Francis, there's such forward momentum to the plot that the book is hard to put down. Even though we know "who done it" it's not apparent that the criminal will ever be found guilty. I peg this as one of Francis's best.

Sid Halley is one of my favorite of Francis' characters, and in *COME TO GRIEF*, the hero isn't beat up as much as he's been in the past (he is a bit, of course--this is a Francis book, after all), and I liked that change. If you love horses--which I do--some aspects of this story may be difficult to read. But this is a deftly plotted novel, and a true pleasure to read.

An entertaining read, this book is fun just because it is full of horse racing background and our hero was once a champion jockey. His friendship with Rachel is truly heartwarming, giving another plot line that shows a very human and vulnerable side of Sid Halley. The ending, though leaving me with a "Whew!" regarding Halley's escapes from the grim reaper, left me cold because Rachel had become a very important part of the story and there were questions that should have been resolved for it to be a "feel-good" novel. Still, Dick Francis is a good author, tells a tidy tale, and keeps my interest throughout.

In *Come to Grief*, ex-jockey turned private investigator Sid Halley has accused one of his best friends of the horrific crime of mutilating a series of horses. His friend Ellis Quint is a popular television personality, and it's unthinkable that he could be responsible for such crimes. Nevertheless, all of the evidence points to Ellis. One of the horses that were harmed was owned by a young girl whom Sid befriends, and he is driven to find the sick criminal responsible. Sid can't talk to the media or anyone else about the evidence because the judge has imposed a gag order, and during the time leading up to the trial Sid is harassed, ridiculed, and even hated for making his accusations. Sid Halley has appeared in several of Dick Francis' books. He's stubborn and relentless in his pursuit of criminals. He has an extreme sense of justice and nothing will stand in his way. In this as in other appearances, he faces overwhelming odds and suffers great violence in pursuit of those who commit crimes. One caveat: when an author writes solely about crimes or violence that take place in the world of horses, it's inevitable that some of that violence is perpetrated against the horses themselves. I found some parts of this book hard to stomach as a

series of horses were mutilated and then put down. Nevertheless, Come to Grief was impossible to put down, and I finished the whole book in one Saturday afternoon extended reading session.

Fans of Sid Halley in the Dick Francis books 'will be happy with another adventure of this hero. Written in fact by his son Felix makes no difference to the reader - the voice, action are the same. A great read for fans of horse racing or good thrillers.

Sid Halley, former champion jockey, looks small, harmless and naive. He's so inconspicuous that you may not even notice he has a prosthetic hand. But in fact, Sid is a brilliant private investigator skilled at espionage, lock picking, computer hacking and judo - a man of action who never shows fear. His good friend Ellis Quint, another ex-jockey, has retired from racing to become a TV chat show celebrity. He's utterly charming and inspires happiness everywhere he goes. Everybody loves him. But in fact Ellis is secretly indulging in sick acts of cruelty to animals. No one would believe it of him. Sid Halley is nearly destroyed trying to expose the truth. Dick Francis heroes almost always get badly battered in a fight or two. But Sid Halley's tribulations go far beyond that. Though totally without self-pity, he's never gotten reconciled to the loss of his hand. In this book, Sid must also bear the burden of betraying a friend. I find the Sid Halley books challenging because life is so very hard on the handicapped investigator. I don't want my heroes to suffer this much! But Dick Francis felt he had reached a higher level with these books. They delve into the nightmares that won't go away - without, however, losing the essential optimism that epitomizes Dick Francis.

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