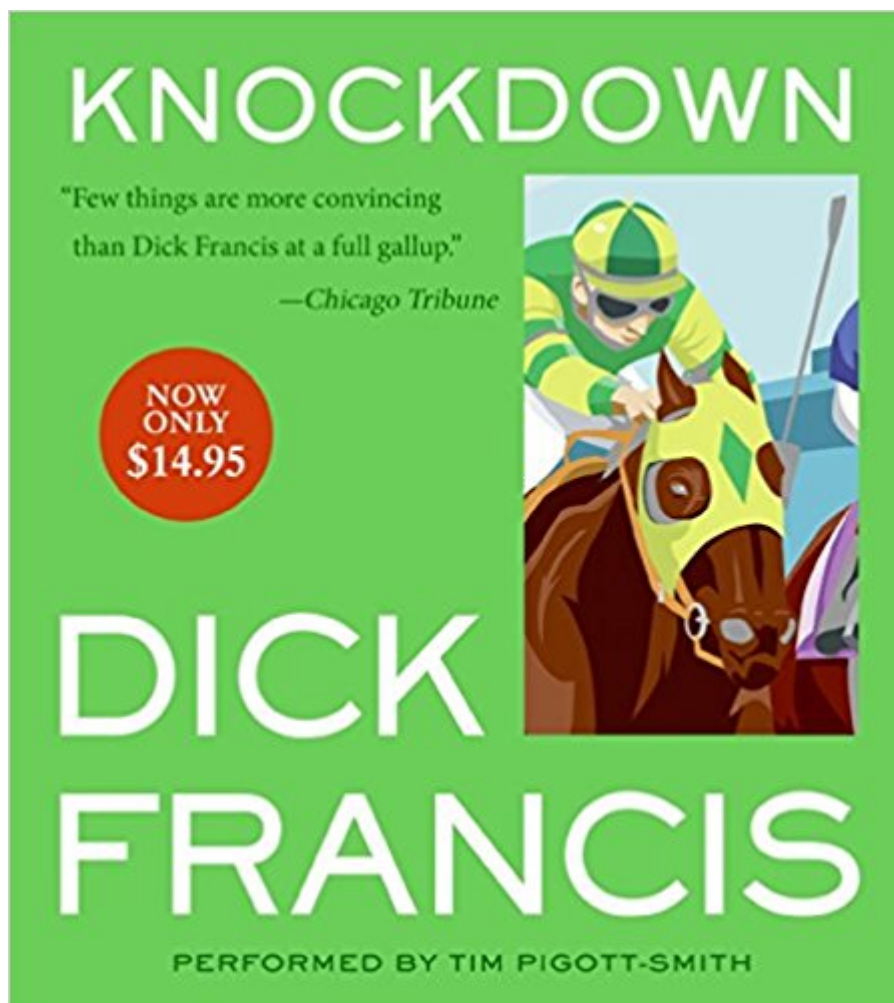




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Knockdown Low Price CD



Synopsis

For a generous commission, ex-prizewinning jockey Jonah Dereham reluctantly agrees to bid on a young steeplechaser on behalf of a wealthy American woman. But his life is thrust into danger immediately following the auction, when he receives a blow to the head by two thugs demanding ownership of the horse. Unfortunately, that's just the beginning—•and now Jonah must figure out the high-stakes game being played...before he becomes its next casualty.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“FEW MATCH FRANCIS FOR DANGEROUS FLIGHTS OF FANCY AND PURE, INVENTIVE MENACE.”
•Boston Herald
“EACH FRANCIS NOVEL SEEMS TO BE HIS BEST.”
•The Sunday Oklahoman
“FEW WRITERS HAVE MAINTAINED SUCH A HIGH STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR AS LONG AS DICK FRANCIS.”
•The San Diego Union-Tribune
“DICK FRANCIS IS A WONDER.”
•The Cleveland Plain Dealer
“[THE] MASTER OF CRIME FICTION AND EQUINE THRILLS.”
•Newsday
“Adventure novels so gripping that they cry out to be read in one gulp—•then quickly reread to savor the details skipped in the first gallop through the pages.”
•Houston Chronicle --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Dick Francis, a former jockey, brings his experience of racing and life around the racetrack to his mysteries. (And so far Francis is a three-time winner of the Edgar Award for writing the best mystery

of the year.) This horse racing background is appealing to my market area of Southern California. Racing is a popular sport amongst Southlanders.--Nanci Andersen, Ballantine Sales --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

” ‘They’re getting so powerful.’ ‘And so greedy,’ I said. ‘That’s it,’ he said in eager agreement. ‘I don’t mind a little on the side. Who does? It’s just that they’ve started pushing so hard. I don’t know what to do. I don’t like their methods and I can’t afford - ’ He stopped, looked depressed, and went on slowly, ‘I suppose I could not just bid when the word goes around. There wouldn’t be much harm in that.’ ‘The make-the-best-of-it syndrome. The buttress of every tyrant in history.’ ‘Knockdown’ - everyone has been. The question is - Will we get up or stay down? Will we submit to vile attack or fight for our integrity? In fact, two types of fighting are presented. One, Jonah’s conflict with a greedy manipulator, and two, Jonah’s brother fighting severe alcoholism. Both experience ‘knockdown’. Who will get up? This theme could slide into a self-righteous, critical, condemning arrogance. It doesn’t. For example . . . ‘The hasty retreat from offense, the placatory grin, the old-pals slap on the shoulder - I disliked them all yet was aware they were only the desperate papering over of no self-confidence. I had known him for years and we had jumped many a fence alongside: Jiminy Bell, one time steeplechase jockey, currently drifting around horse places hoping for handouts. Where but for the grace . . .’ ‘Drink?’ I suggested. This insight - that softens cold analysis - is part of all Francis books. This one particularly highlights patience and forbearance. Especially Jonah’s endurance of the insulting, disrespectful attacks of his alcoholic brother, who still lives with him. Nevertheless, Jonah continues to hope. Why? His girlfriend comments . . . ‘I’ve always been told it was an illness. That you couldn’t help it. That one drink set off a sort of chain reaction.’ ‘It isn’t the one drink. It’s the wanting to drink. Alcoholism is in the mind.’ This belief in - free will, human integrity, personal dignity - contrasts profoundly with modern thought. Anyone imbued with the conviction that human character is determined by our childhood, DNA, food, class or anything external will not enjoy this story, or any of Francis’ books. After Jonah defeats the villain . . . ‘From greed, the visitor had set out to destroy me. Not because I’d done him any harm. Simply because I stood in his plundering way. He’d sent me a message; join or be flattened, an ultimatum old as tyranny.’ ‘My own fault, as they had tirelessly pointed out, if the answer was flatten and be damned.’ This vivid conviction - that evil is driven by selfish arrogant greed, from a freely chosen course - drives this drama. The counterpoint - that honor is produced by a freely chosen course of justice, righteousness, courage - creates a marvelous work!

Dick Francis continues to be one of the best mystery writers ever, in my view, and I've read dozens of his books and dozens of other mysteries. What I love about Dick Francis books is that first, since he was a jockey, you learn about horses and horse racing but along with this he weaves in characters who specialize in other professions so with each read the reader learns more about some other specialty. In that way there is fascinating "non fiction" information interwoven into the always fun, twisty mysteries. And they are always "uppers" in one way or another...Recommended!!

Jonah Dereham is an ex-jockey with three fused vertebrae and a dislocating shoulder. Now making his living buying horses as a bloodstock agent, Jonah is too honest for his own good. While all around him, other bloodstock agents are cheating buyers, sellers and breeders - Noah is foolishly happy with a simple commission, no hidden kickbacks. He's ruining it for everyone else. His associates threaten to crush him if he won't play the game. For Jonah, buying horses turns out to be even more dangerous than riding them. Although the plot feels a bit slight to me, Jonah is a thoroughly likeable hero. And Francis draws an interesting portrait of Jonah's loner of a girlfriend, an air-traffic controller who never loses control of her heart. Jonah's self-pitying alcoholic brother is also well done. Dick Francis is always worth reading. I was in the middle of this book when I heard that he just died. The news made me sad. I think it's a mistake to see Dick Francis as a mere writer of horse mysteries. The horses are there, and he loves them, but Dick Francis is really writing about character, integrity, doing your best against impossible odds, seeing the good in others, taking risks, throwing yourself into life. My tribute to Dick Francis will be to read every one of his books. Wish there were more.

This book didn't instantly "grab" me like most of Dick Francis's writing does. Midway, the book picks up the pace; then, I didn't want to put it down. It was easy, fast-paced reading, and nice for summer relaxation. I had read Knockdown several years ago, so throughout the book I was thinking, "oh, yes, that was what I had forgotten." Good books are like good friends: I like to re-visit them; but maybe that was why I thought the start was slow. Anyone who enjoys horses and mysteries probably will like Francis's writing. I particularly appreciate his ability to succinctly, but casually paint word pictures of horses, people, and places. He gives scope to the imagination of the reader. I had to laugh when the hero of Knockdown recommended Halley as an investigator. Of course, Sid Halley is one of my favorite Francis characters. Knockdown was worth reading again.

On time and as advertised.

I really enjoy all Dick Francis's books, although they seem to be racing based, the variety of the stories is fantastic. I really enjoy the different stage settings he uses for his books. I have also read his son's books (Felix Francis) and they are equally as good. Unlike other well known authors, they don't have a set formula they use and just change the names.

I will make no secret of the fact that Dick Francis is my favorite thriller writer. I love good, economical prose, and he is a master at it. In his autobiography he said that he couldn't leave a sentence until it was the best sentence he could write, and it shows when he limns a character or a situation in a sentence or two where others would need a page. Knockdown is not one of his very best, but even second-rate Francis beats the best of most writers. I won't outline the plot, as others have done so, but simply suggest very strongly that you read it.

As all Dick Francis books, this one was super read.

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