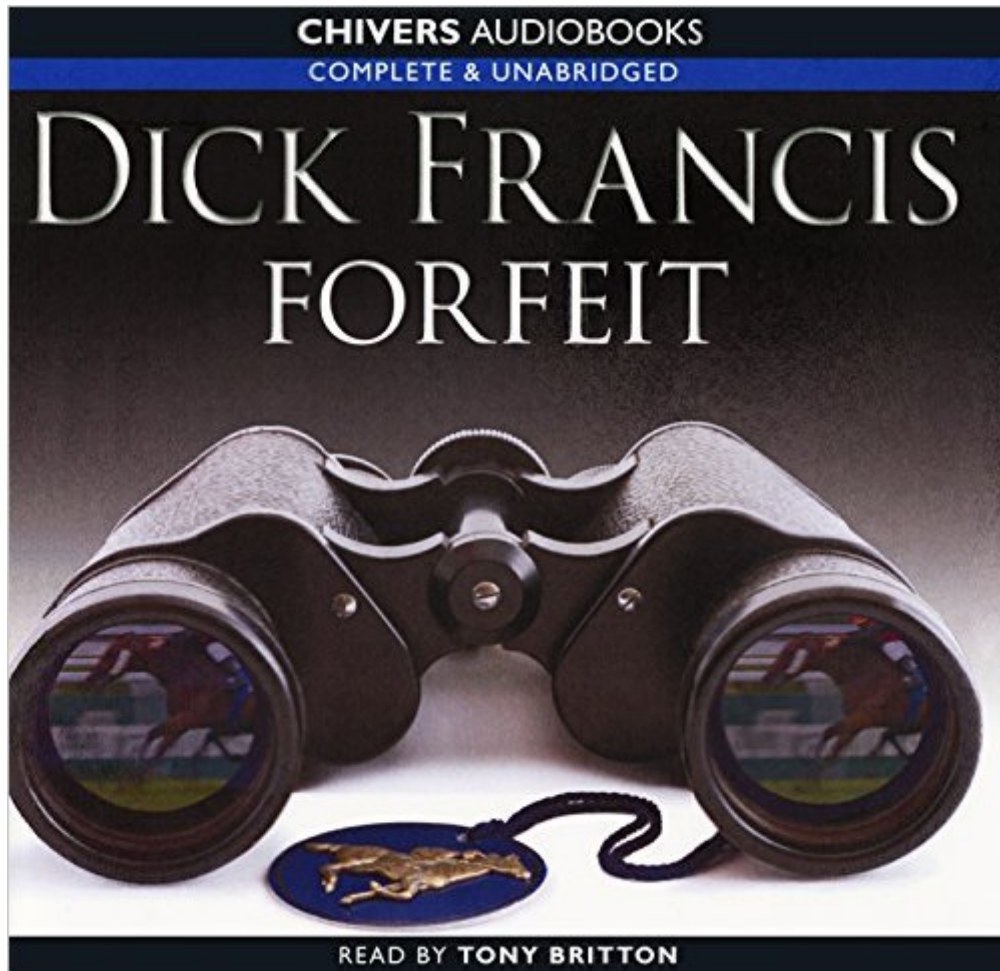


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Forfeit: By Dick Francis (Unabridged Audio Book 6cds)



Synopsis

James Tyrone was the troubleshooting gracing correspondent of the Sunday Blaze, a newspaper dedicated to exposing scandals in the noisiest (and most profitable) way. Ty was accustomed to hot water, but from the day a Fleet Street colleague died after giving him some serious advice, he found himself wading deep into more danger than he expected. What he thought to be the fairly routine uncovering of a minor racing fraud turned into a major hunt involving ruthless international crime. A spanner in the works gets chewed up by the cogs, Ty couldn't emerge unscathed. And throughout he had to deal with the further problems of his difficult marriage and a perilous liaison with a beautiful, chilly-hearted dress designer.

Book Information

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Authors, A-Z > (F) > Francis, Dick

Customer Reviews

Journalists should be aware that they might stop writing after having read this incredible thriller by Dick Francis. In this thriller, Dick Francis presents the story of an English journalist (Ty) who finds out about some corruption connected with a series of nonstarters in horse racing. Ty decides to uncover the cause for this series of nonstarters. Now the story becomes really interesting. Therefore, I do not want to spoil it. You have to read it yourself. Dick Francis is able to convince me with this thriller because the plot seems pretty realistic. It is not a book where one would think: "It could not happen anyway". Mr Francis does not present the story idealized. In conclusion I have to say that you ought to read this book even if you do not like horses or horse racing!

Sportswriter James (Ty) Tyrone covers the racing scene for a British tabloid. A colleague drunkenly offers to give him 'a piece of advice' but before he can remember what it is falls out of a 7th floor window to his death. A tragic accident...or is it. As Ty begins to investigate he uncovers a far reaching conspiracy throughout the racing world. Before he can bring the criminals to justice Ty has to fight for his and his invalid wife's lives. As always with a Francis novel the reader is taken into

another aspect of the racing world (this time it is sports writing). The hero is stoic, bravely bearing up to his deep personal tragedy, (this time a beloved wife crippled by polio) who must endure many trials before he emerges triumphant in the end. While Francis' work is formulistic it is also quite good. The mystery is cleverly done, the action exciting. The hero is flawed but sympathetic, his situation touching and when he defeats the bad guys the reader is left with a good feeling. If you are already a fan of the series this one is another winner. If you are new to the series this is a good place to start.

I had been thinking: Do I really want to read about horse races? I only watch the Kentucky Derby and sometimes two more races, if there's hope for a Triple Crown. My friend had been urging me to read Dick Francis, and recently recommended *Forfeit*, which finally I read. In the book, Francis is always low-key and, as a former jockey, knows his stuff. Suspense is permanent, the plotting intelligent and flawless. In *Forfeit*, we follow journalist James Tyrone, as he and his London newspaper colleagues investigate racetrack fraud. The highly profitable criminal organizations pressure racing writers to mislead England's legitimate bettors. The perpetrators are not hesitant to inflict serious bodily harm and worse. Francis draws his characters carefully. We know them all, sometimes gaining our affection, identifying with their personal struggles. Tyrone cares for his mostly paralyzed wife Elizabeth, who could not survive without a breathing machine. A major plot mover is a relationship between Tyrone and an attractive university professor, leading to extended complications and threats. We also meet a stable owner who is dealing with his spacy wife and troublesome sons. We see the bad guys. We are introduced to the horses, especially a central one named Tiddely Pom. We are in the British racing world. The writing is memorable.

It's difficult to find a character in contemporary fiction who succeeds so well at living up to his principles with hardly a blink of his figurative eye. In "*Forfeit*" there is such a character. Confronted with a choice between selling out his integrity and facing hardship, journalist, James Tyrone invariably chooses the hardship and immediately applies his mental resources to overcome the threat. Francis has created a masterpiece of characterization, plot and style in yet another of his fabulous novels. You won't need coffee to stay awake with this one!

Forfeit, by Dick Francis, tells the story of sports writer James Tyrone beginning when a drunken colleague, Bert Checkov, warns him not to sell his column. Making vague allusions to blackmail and bribery, the man is so drunk that he's all but incoherent and then goes his own way. Chalking it up to the booze, Tyrone leaves his friend only to learn minutes later that the man has just fallen out of a

window and died. A short while later, we learn that Checkov has been heavily touting a large number of horses that end up getting scratched from their races shortly before post time. This is the tip of the iceberg that leads Tyrone into conflict with bookmakers who will stop at nothing to continue a scheme that has already netted them a small fortune. Tyrone is a remarkably strong character who deals with a home life that could only be called difficult, an editor who doesn't mind risking his life to get a story, and a gang of thugs that don't mind dishing out a beating or even murder to get what they want. He is not perfect, but he does have a good heart and readers can't help but root for him. Most of the characters are interesting and portrayed uniquely enough that they remain distinct and not just cardboard cutouts put in place to fill their assigned roles. The story builds momentum as it goes. In the beginning, I found it mildly interesting but as it progressed it became a real page-turner. This is the first novel by Dick Francis that I have read but he has been one of the most respected mystery writers for many decades. His writing style is very clear and crisp, easy to read and understand. Some English novelists use language that can make it hard for Americans to follow but I didn't find that to be the case here. I am not particularly interested in horses or horse racing but I do like good stories with interesting characters and there was a healthy dose of that in Forfeit. After reading this book, I'll be ordering more Dick Francis novels soon.

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