

## LoveReading Reader reviews of Taking The Fall by A.P. McCoy

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

**Alan Brown**

*The author's knowledge of horseracing and love of horses leaps from the page. The plot twists and turns to a climax. A P McCoy plays to his strengths.*

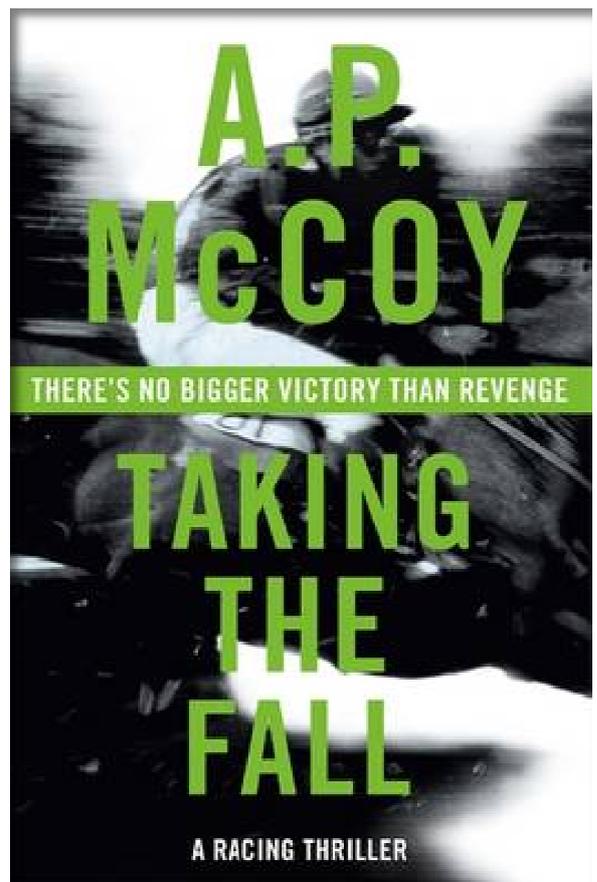
*This is a book for an escapist read yet the author's obvious knowledge of horse racing does indicate that A P McCoy could also write fiction books of substance that have an equestrian theme.*

*The pages about the plot and the world of horse racing seem to be written by an expert and they sizzle. The filler parts of the book are not written with the same intensity so they just simmer.*

*Some of the dialogue in the sex scenes is not of the same quality as that of the equestrian scenes but they do add to the escapism nature of the book.*

*The story is set out from the start but the way it develops is enthralling and there are sudden changes in plot direction that keeps the reader alert and interested. There is also a roundness to the story as it also introduces topics such as friendship, loyalty and dementia thereby preventing the story becoming a narrow horseracing tome.*

*I look forward to reading future books by A P McCoy to see if his author experience produces better balanced stories that are as thrilling, informative and fun to read as 'Taking the Fall'.*



## **Linda Hill**

### ***A romp through the murky world of horse racing.***

*'Taking the Fall' is a lightweight read that is relatively entertaining. It has some intrigue, some romance and sexuality and throws an uncomfortable spotlight on the less salubrious side of horse training, betting and racing.*

*Duncan Claymore wants nothing more than to avenge the wrongs done to his father by the corrupt trio Osbourne, Pleasance and Cadogan, alongside his own rivalry with Champion Jockey, Sandy Sanderson and the narrative switches, sometimes rather clumsily, between past events and Duncan's current life as he plots and manoeuvres his way to revenge.*

*I found the sex scenes the most successfully written elements, but felt they added little to progressing the plot. Whilst the treatment of women was different in the late seventies and early eighties when the book is set, apart from Roisin, most of the women are presented as extraneous accessories. Secondary characters seemed better defined for me than Duncan himself.*

*For the majority of the book I felt the plot was more like a list of events than a coherent narrative until the last 30 pages when it really picked up and the story ends with the potential for the next instalment as Duncan still has 'major unfinished business'.*

## **Lee Doyle**

*A.P. McCoy has so far been crowned Champion National Hunt Jockey in the UK 18 times. He is regarded as one of the greatest and most enduring figures in sport. His single minded determination is the stuff of legends. His debut novel is a well paced and well written narrative that gives the reader a ride through the mind of the champ.*

*There is a fair amount of racy behaviour in the bedroom department, this was unexpected and would have caused quite a stir if it appeared in an early Dick Francis novel. McCoy, however, is a worthy addition to the ranks of turf fiction writers, and although there are some flaws in the characters in this debut effort, his experience and knowledge of his subject is unrivalled. **This is a good start for AP, in racing terms he's completed two circuits of Aintree with a few questionable jumps on the way and he's cruising past the elbow on his way to a bloodless victory. I look forward to his next effort.***

## **Barbara Goldie**

***A gripping first novel by champion jockey A P McCoy. Delving into the dark side of horse racing, it's a great read for horse racing fans or crime fiction fans.***

*'Taking the Fall' is a great first novel. A P McCoy certainly knows about horse racing and brings it vividly to life in this thriller. He can certainly tell a story, it is fast paced, a real page turner set in the darker side of horse racing in the 1970's.*

*Jockey Duncan Claymore must choose between his future and his family. He is moving up the ranks and wants to get to the top. His father Charlie was a trainer but his health is deteriorating. He was ruined when bitter rivalries got out of hand. Can Duncan take these men down and be the best.*

*A P McCoy creates a spellbinding arena for his novel, his descriptions take the reader to the heart of the horse racing world, his characters are believable, his language modern and easy to read. It is a compulsive quick read, with good chapter length. He brings the tension of the horse race onto the page. This is a great book for both horse racing fans or lovers of crime fiction or those who love both. Readers who love the novels of Dick Francis will be pleased to see a new name up there. I look forward to the next book.*

## **Debbie Patrick**

*Duncan Claymore could have it all. He's one of the country's up and coming young jockeys and this season his sights are set on getting right to the top. He has the talent and the tenacity, but he also has his demons, and it's these that threaten to overthrow his burning ambition. Duncan was taught everything he knows by his father, Charlie, a former trainer whose career and reputation were destroyed when a series of bitter rivalries got out of hand. It ruined him and Charlie hasn't been able to set foot on a racecourse since. Now, with his father's health rapidly declining, Duncan is desperate to beat the best and at the same time take down the men responsible for Charlie's ruin. But can he do both or must he choose between his family and his future?*

*I enjoy this sort of read and am a big fan of Dick Francis' novels along with John Francome, so it had a lot to live up to. I found it a good solid start to A P McCoy's new career in novel writing. It reminded me of the initial John Francome novels i.e. was good but not brilliant, however, with time his novels got much better to almost rival Dick Francis's books (not completely as he was*

*the master in this sort of novel) hopefully, when AP McCoy gets a few more novels under his belt he will also be able to be rated alongside the great Dick Francis.*

*He obviously has a passion for the sport of horse racing so makes it more believable as he knows the insider info that the general public would not know.*

***A good solid start and looking forward to reading more novels by this author. Well worth a read.***

### **Angela Rhodes**

*Duncan Claymore is a young jockey, on his way to fame and fortune, who in between racing and enjoying life, keeps an eye on his dad, Charlie, who is in a nursing home suffering with dementia.*

*Charlie was once a well liked and respected trainer, who was framed for dodgy dealings, lost everything, and is no longer allowed anywhere near a race track. This hurts Duncan, as his father can now only watch his only son ride to victory via the TV.*

*Duncan wants answers, and is willing to do anything to find them!*

*The story flashes between Duncan's story and that of his dad's with ease.*

*This is A.P. McCoy's first novel, and boy does he know his stuff, which isn't surprising as like Dick Francis and John Francome, he is a jockey who has won The Grand National, Gold Cup and the Scottish, Welsh and Irish Grand Nationals. So **if you want a good thriller and like a good story then this is it. You don't have to understand horseracing to enjoy this great book. Can't wait for the next!***

### **Helen Sidebottom**

***I enjoy a good thriller and was looking forward to learning more about the dark side of the horse racing world but I am sorry to say I was a bit disappointed with the ending of this book.***

*It did have its twists and turns and menacing characters, but I thought the way the love interest ended was a bit lame. Sorry, didn't have me enthralled but was an interesting read from a racing world perspective.*

## **Joan Hill**

***In this debut novel you're placed under starters orders, entering the exciting world of jockeys, trainers and owners to explore rivalry and intrigue. Judge for yourself who the winners are.***

*A.P. McCoy is considered the perennial champion jockey. With over 13,000 races to his name (equivalent to 31,000 miles or 1.25 times around the Earth) this novel is the debut novel of the champion Irish jockey, although he has penned three autobiographies. Said to be the odds-on favourite to replace Dick Francis, this novel will certainly appeal to fans of the exciting world of horse racing.*

*'Taking The Fall' is a pacey thriller and is told with knowledgeable detail. The main character, young 'wanna be' champion jockey Duncan Claymore, has scores to settle and a very effective way of bringing about the downfall of a jealous trio of corrupt men who in the past had set up Duncan's father with unfounded rumors and scenarios that effectively brought his career and his stables to an end.*

*With the revenge offensive set against exciting races and rivalries, the fast, competitiveness of racing and with subterfuge and threats from his enemies, Duncan has hard decisions to make. In the background there is a simmering romance, adultery, living the high life and tempting offers to fix races. What choices will Duncan make?*

*This novel is a mile-a-minute roller coaster, dealing with topical issues and moral dilemmas within the field of horse racing. I enjoyed reading it and at the same time have learnt such a lot about this sport.*

## **Lynda DeFreitas**

***A racing thriller about revenge.***

*This is a racy, pacey story with lots of action on and off the racecourse. The tension builds throughout and Duncan Claymore, a promising young jockey and the main character, is portrayed well. He wants to get to the top but his thirst for revenge against the men who ruined his father's career is threatening his ambition. His actions to achieve his aims are contained, calculated and thorough.*

***A P McCoy has made a promising start to his writing career and he is up with the other runners trying for the top spot of racing thrillers.***

## **Christine McCormick**

*Never having read any Dick Francis or John Francombe novels, I have nothing to compare this book to really. To be honest, I offered to review it as my mother-in-law is a Tony McCoy fan, and I thought I could let her know what it was like. Given the rather graphic sex scenes in the book, I think I will be suggesting she give it a miss!*

***This is an undemanding read, which takes the reader into the world of racing, warts and all.*** There are rivalries between jockeys, trainers, owners and old feuds- which is where Duncan Claymore, the central character comes in. His father's career and reputation were ruined in the past by his rivals- something Charlie Claymore never recovered from- and something Duncan is determined to avenge.

*Duncan gets himself noticed by his father's old rivals, who then ask him to ride for them. He has to play a very careful game, trying not to upset his father who is suffering from dementia, but, also persuading his enemies that he is on their side, as he attempts to gain his revenge.*

*While the novel gained pace well in the run up to the Cheltenham Gold Cup, I found the ending a little disappointing.*

## **Julie Viliunas**

***I loved this book. I have no interest particularly in horses or horse racing which is why I thought I'd give it a try. It was a lovely easy read with a decent plot and cracking end.***

*There are moments of real insight into how a jockey feels when he's racing; I really picked up on the chemistry between man and horse. Talk of horses enjoying their race surprised me, but I guess they would? There was a bitter sweet justice in the ending with plenty of scope for a sequel. I wasn't able to guess the plot, nor did I want to read the end half way thru which is always a good sign! The details of a jockey's diet really were an eye opener....this book will not compel you to eat, you might be shocked to realise how little jockeys consume. Even if you don't like horses buy this book, you won't be disappointed.*

**Susan Walsh**

***Take a look at the exciting world of horseracing and more so at the people who are involved in it all.***

*Life in the horse world set at its best.*

*Full of chances.*

*All about how to get to the top, who you meet, use or get used by.*

*'Taking the Fall' is an excellent read. You'll get a mixture of it all here even a little racy in parts.*

*A thoroughly enjoyable read.*

**Julie Bickerdyke**

***McCoy has a great writing style and keeps the story moving at a good pace.***

*The story premise is credible - Duncan's revenge on behalf of his wronged father. Once you understand what happened in the past you can sympathise. McCoy's descriptions of the racing world are excellent and help to make the story real. He has a talent for using his own experiences to good effect.*

*I enjoyed the story but there is room for improvement before McCoy can challenge Dick Francis.*

*It took a while to warm to the main character - Duncan, perhaps because he was out for revenge by any means and came across as rather shallow.*

*It seemed a little heavy on the sex scenes and at times had a feel more of Jilly Cooper than Dick Francis.*

*Just as I was starting to relate to Duncan and his need for revenge it was spoiled by a bizarre plot to intimidate one of the characters that didn't feel realistic.*

*The ending spoiled what had been an enjoyable book overall, with Duncan taking no responsibility for what happened and claiming he could never have anticipated events - I could see it coming so I don't know why he didn't.*