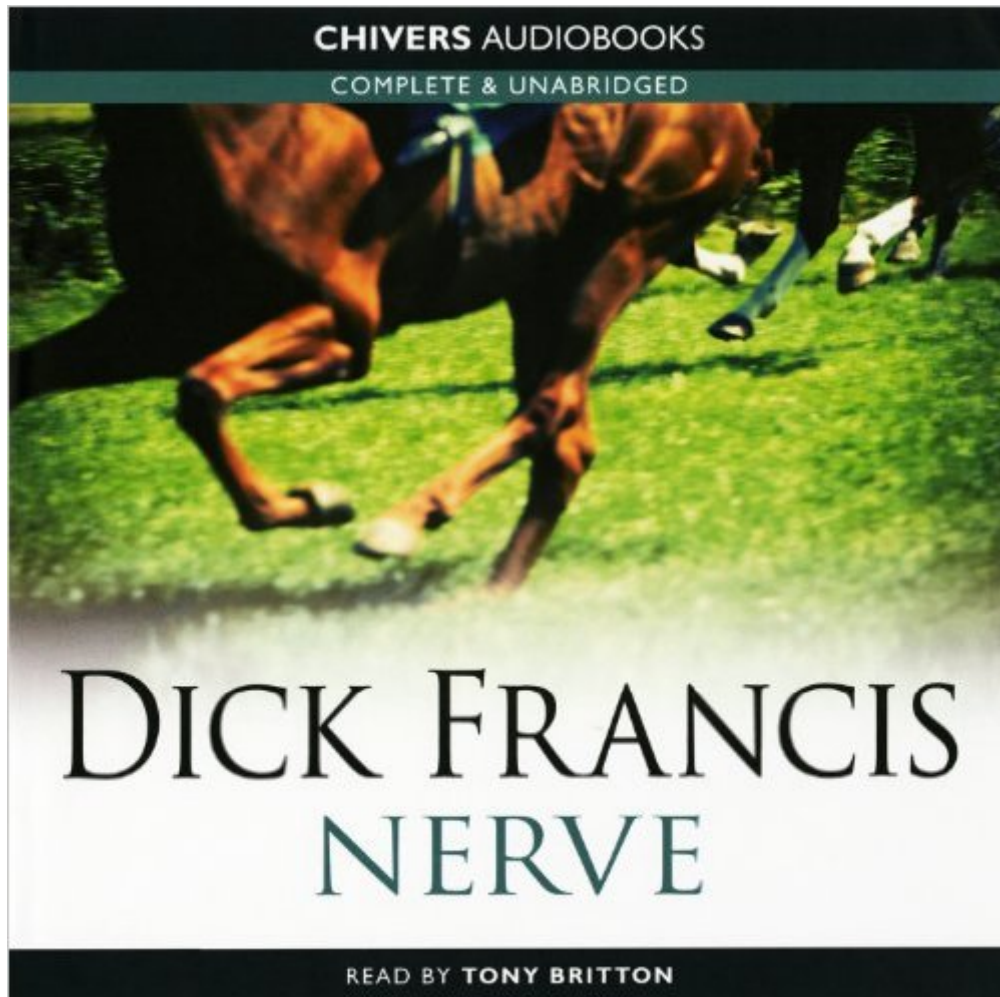


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Nerve: By Dick Francis (Unabridged Audiobook 8cds)



Synopsis

Despair, suicide, and obsessive hatred, mixed well with humor, love, and horses, brew up into the story of a battle between one man's nerve and another man's cunning. Robert Finn, steeplechase jockey, finds himself the focus of a malicious campaign which is also afflicting his friends. He sets out to discover its source, and remove it.

Book Information

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (57 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Dick Francis has written so many bestselling mysteries, it's mindboggling. He excels in crafting enormously engaging, civilized whodunits, which go down smooth as cognac. Mr. Francis has a habit of introducing elements from the racing world into his novels (for those not in the know, Francis used to be a jockey). Yes, it's true that his heroes all come from the same mold and the stories do contain certain formulaic elements, but I think Francis's magic lies in the humanity and empathic nature with which he cloaks his protagonists. His heroes are all too human, all too flawed, and uniformly unassuming and Britishly reserved. Yet, without exception, they all have unexpected pluck, hidden strength, and the inner fortitude to do the right thing. In four decades, Mr. Francis has written some of my favorite mysteries: *Forfeit*, *Rat Race*, *Reflex*, *Hot Money*, *The Edge*, *The Danger*, *Decider*, and *To the Hilt*. And then there's *Nerve*. *Nerve* holds a special place in my heart. I first stumbled across Dick Francis's mystery books years ago when I was a kid thumbing thru a Reader's Digest book. That book contained a condensed version of *Nerve*, which I went thru in a flash. As soon as I could, I went to the public library and borrowed the full-length version and tore thru that one, too. Since then, I've read everything that Dick Francis has ever written and I've enjoyed every one tremendously (even his anthology *Field of Thirteen*), but, thru the years, I've come back again and again to *Nerve* and its charismatic hero Rob Finn. It's just such a darn good

story. *Nerve*, published in 1964, was, at the time, only Francis's second novel. Yet, even back then, he had what it took to tell a captivating, suspenseful story.

This is one of Francis' very first books. Written in the early 1960's and set in England, 'Nerve' concerns the exploits of a young and aspiring top steeple-chase jockey. If you haven't read Francis before, you are in for a very nice and enjoyable low-key thriller. It's hard to point to another author and say that Dick Francis is like him or her, because his work is so unlike other writers. Every one of Francis' books has pretty much the same plot outline, but in a strange way, this is not at all bothersome. One reads a Francis book to enjoy the characters and the inordinant amount of plot laden tension that is somehow packed into such a mild mannered little book. Every time I pick up one of Francis' books I think of the Jean Cocteau movie from the early 50's I think called *Orphius*. It's based on the old greek myth where some guy goes to hade's (the ancient greek underworld) to rescue his wife who was stolen from him by a god. He gains her freedom on the condition that he not look at her on the way back until they are out of Hade's. Only at the very last step, he does turn around and she is turned into a pillar of salt or something like that... Anyways, in Cocteaus version of the myth, he has the main characters cast as poets, and they drive around the French country side being flocked by admiring fans and lovely young women. The poets there are the rock stars of that fictional society. Well, Francis creates a world very similar to that with his horse racing books, where the entire country of England revolves around the going ons of different aspects of racing. One interesting aspect of this book, discussed by other readers in this review forum, is that of the human condition known as 'Nerve.

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