



## The Domino Killer

*Neil White*

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## **The Domino Killer** Neil White

When a man is found beaten to death in a local Manchester park, Detective Constable Sam Parker is one of the investigating officers. Sam swiftly identifies the victim, but what at first looks like an open and shut case quickly starts to unravel when he realises that the victim's fingerprints were found on a knife at another crime scene, a month earlier.

Meanwhile, Sam's brother, Joe - a criminal defence lawyer in the city - comes face to face with a man whose very presence sends shockwaves through his life. Joe must confront the demons of his past as he struggles to come to terms with the darkness that this man represents.

## **The Domino Killer Details**

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Author : Neil White

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## From Reader Review The Domino Killer for online ebook

### Christine says

This is the third in the Parker Brothers trilogy, by Neil White. It was also my introduction to Joe and Sam, the lawyer and the detective based in Manchester. It does bring me out in a nervous rash jumping into books at the end of a series. I bravely ignored my strong impulse to read the other books and dived in.

I do not know where the previous two books went in the series, but I can make a shrewd guess. Ellie Parker was murdered nearly twenty years ago. A teenage girl whose death devastated the Parker family. The book is about resolution and catching a cold blooded killer.

A straight forward death becomes more complicated, when evidence is found linking it to another crime scene. This is a kind of 'domino effect'. This brings Sam into the picture, as the cop. A new and disturbing client for Joe brings the worst time of his life back.

I really enjoyed myself getting into the lives of Sam and Joe. Neil White writes in a very engaging manner and has an extremely readable style. I found myself speeding through it, anxious to see what would happen next and loving the outcome. I see Neil White as a writer, who is coming into his own and I can see why he is gaining a following. I must get my hands on the other two books in the series.

With a twisted evil character at its centre, and an intriguing pair of brothers, this is a great book to lose yourself in.

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### Elaine says

This is the third in a series, but the first that I have read and it really didn't matter, this book can be read as a standalone. Having said that, I really enjoyed reading about the Parker brothers – detective Sam and lawyer Joe and I can see myself now going back over the series – and it isn't often that I say that. Usually, if I come to a series halfway through I never feel the urge to go back and read the earlier books – it always feels too much like going over old ground. I just liked the way the characters developed throughout this story – they felt realistic and likeable. We got to know about every aspect of their lives, so I could really identify with them.

This is a police thriller, a serial killer story and for Joe and Sam it is going to get very personal indeed. Now, I did find the first half of the book to be a slightly slower read than the second, but the second half really takes off. It is pacy with a complex plot line that twists and turns all the time. Did I figure it out? Yes, but only just before it was revealed in the book. The climax is full of danger and thrills but I have to say I felt a slight twinge of disappointment at the very end of the read. It is not really a cliffhanger ending, but one which left me wondering whether there were a couple of pages missing. Hopefully though, it paves the way for a return of the Parkers.

Many thanks to the publisher for the review copy.

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## Linda Boa says

Technically a 3.5, but when I was at school you rounded it up to a 4 if it was 3.5 upwards. (That's from primary school! But when my two were at school I've memories of it being done differently. Same with long division. And for adding, they use a "number block" thing now!) This is, according to GoodReads, the third book featuring the brothers, who are based in Manchester, but to be honest, I'd never have known that (although I did wonder if there were possibly others.) So you're fine "going in cold" with this book – I know that gives certain people a horrible feeling, not starting at the start of the series (you know who you are!) but it's not a problem, unless that is an issue with you. It's written in third person past tense, for those of you for whom that's important, and most, although by no means all, the chapters concentrate on the brothers.

Anyway...what you find out early in the book, and this isn't a clanging spoiler, is that Joe has a new client – and it's a man he instantly recognises as having killed his and Dan's sister, 17 years previously. He'd always promised that, if he ever saw him again, he would kill the man who destroyed his family. So he begins to investigate his new client, who, bizarrely, has been accused of breaking into the police lot and stealing his own car back – which had been confiscated due to lack of insurance – then burning it!

The book is a beautifully plotted crime novel – very clever and intricate, which means you don't want to put it down for long, and miss a twist. I really enjoyed reading about Dan's solid police work, desk work being his specialty – accounts, e-mails, lists of car reg plates – he's your man. Sounds dull but White has a way of making it interesting, and it's always feasible – no really crazy coincidences. And for those who enjoy action, there's plenty to be found, as we follow Joe on his mission to prove the man is a murderer.

There's also a series of three, seemingly unrelated, murders, which Dan is involved in investigating, and his boss dubs The Domino Killings, as he's sure there's some kind of tenuous link, even though the investigators can't find it. But they couldn't possibly be related to Dan and Joe's sister's murder 17 years previously...could they?

There are some fine lines – “A cigarette was passed along the line, but the way each cherished it told Joe it contained more than tobacco.” There's a comment about how men can never identify flowers – how true! The short snappy chapters, often ending on a cliffhanger, did, in the last couple of sentences, occasionally sound a bit clichéd – I noted, “There were hard times ahead”; and at the end of the next chapter, “He had to get her through this. He owed her that much at least”. There were others, but you get my point, so that's possibly something the author should be careful of.

And one bit annoyed me – someone (no spoilers!) has enough evidence for the police to catch a murderer, but doesn't hand it in immediately as they need to “understand” it first. I know this is a necessary plot device to ensure a grand action-packed denouement, but it was bloody stupid, crimeworm must say. Still, it made for an hour or so of extra high octane entertainment. And if that's what floats your boat, as it does mine, Neil White is definitely worth seeking out. It's cleverly-written, action packed, and contains a superbly evil character, with a motive that intrigued me.

Perfect for: fans of police procedurals, with a good bit of action, like David Mark's Aector McAvoy or Jane Casey's Maeve Kerrigan series. Would make a great book to read while travelling, or on holiday. Take more books, though – you'll rattle through this one!

## Janet says

Here we are then at book three of the Parker brothers trilogy. I guess it could be read as a standalone because backstory is given, but I'm glad I started at the beginning. I love to see character development and the feel of the whole story in full. Besides anal me wouldn't let me do otherwise! I just can't!!

So here we are dealing with the cold case of Ellie, the boys' sister, who was taken away from them tragically years before. In the previous two books her story was revealed to us bit by bit in the background. We know what happened the repercussions of it all and where those affected are now. What we have with this book is the story now taking centre stage which is both fitting and most satisfying as a reader.

White undoubtedly writes with an intelligent brilliance and I love that. Only ever giving snippets throughout as cast members are tightly woven with an intricacy that leaves you dazzled. A couple of times I had to re-read sections to give my brain time to wrap itself around the interweaving. Thinking I'm preempting answers and directions only then to be thrown along different paths and scratching my head in wonderment. Words are never wasted here as we're taken to different parts of Manchester with descriptive settings and historical language bringing it all to vivid life. Be it bleak or sunshiny dazzling you get a really good feel for the place. Great for anyone who doesn't know the area well.

The Domino Killer is a great story that wraps up the trilogy well. For me personally, my favourite was book two, The Death Collector. Every aspect of that one just hit the mark and then some. But this is a great read also and I'm really glad I read all three books. To not have done would have been a disservice to the Parker brothers and their stories.... and I couldn't do that!! Great stuff!

Much appreciation goes to the author, publisher and NetGalley for the ARC.

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## Thebooktrail says

Booktrail the locations of The Domino Killer here my The Domino Killer booktrail

The Third in the Joe and Sam Parker series shows Manchester's underbelly through the eyes of a lawyer and detective brothers.

This is quite a unique read from a man who is both a prosecutor and a writer. He sees things from both sides as it were and the overall picture is a fascinating one. I've not read a book where both sides are represented like this, in quite the same way and getting inside the head of a killer was disturbing but powerful.

It all starts tense and dark and doesn't let up – I mean imagine meeting the man who killed your sister? What would you and would your professional role blend into the personal?

I did find the Parker brothers an interesting mix. This is book three but reads as a stand alone. The link to the domino idea of a chain of events knocking into each other and having unexpected consequences was a deft touch. Very nice Mr White, very nice.

## **Liz Barnsley says**

So “The Domino Killer” then is the third book in the Parker brothers trilogy and also one hell of a finale – I read it in just over 2 hours straight (no way I was putting it down once picked up, way too addictive for that) – it often had me on the edge of my seat. I did actually pull hair out. Ouch.

Anyway, this is the one any fan of this series (which definitely includes me) has been waiting for, dealing as it does finally with the cold case murder of Ellie – Joe and Sam’s Sister – details of which have been drip fed over the last two novels, to prevent spoilers I won’t say more. Suffice to say it has been a fantastic backdrop to everything else that went on, giving a wonderful depth to the characters and an authentic edge to the people they are. By the time “The Domino Killer” arrived I was in it with them all the way.

I am more than a little in love with Neil White’s writing style, every time it just gets better and better – there is a truly brilliant subtlety to the words on the page even in the more violent moments – and it packs a heck of an emotional punch, at times you really feel it.

Crime fiction is an inclusive genre, there really is something for everyone, it is also a rather crowded one where sometimes the gems can get lost in the crowd. There are some fantastic British crime writers out there of which this author is one – for me he is right up there with Billingham and MacBride, especially when it comes to gritty realism and a refusal to pull punches. With this book that feeling has just intensified, so if you haven’t given Mr White a go yet then I’d highly recommend that you do. With this trilogy or indeed with any of the books that came before.

Pitch perfect pacing and delicate construction make these must reads for any Crime Fiction - fan, on my top ten “must read” list for a few years now, if this standard continues I don’t see that changing anytime soon.

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## **Elaine Tomasso says**

I would like to thank Netgalley and Little, Brown Book Group UK for a review copy of The Domino Killer, the third Manchester based novel to feature DC Sam Parker and his brother, defence lawyer Joe Parker.

Sam is called out to a murder scene where a man has been bludgeoned to death with a hammer for no obvious reason. This is his second apparently motiveless crime scene in as many months but he is initially the only one seeing a connection. In the meantime his brother Joe is called in to represent Mark Proctor in a strange case of burglary. Mark's car was stopped and impounded because he was driving without insurance. A couple of hours later he broke into the police pound, stole his car back and was arrested when he was caught fleeing the scene of his burning car. He refuses to say why he acted as he did and Joe isn't really interested because he is in shock. He recognises Mark Proctor as the man who followed his sister into the woods and killed her 18 years previously. How Joe deals with this situation and how Mark Proctor ties in to Sam's case is the meat of the novel.

I thoroughly enjoyed The Domino Killer. It is a cleverly plotted and well paced, tense novel with an excellent twist at the end. Mark Proctor is a classically evil psychopath and the revelations about his past crimes come thick and fast. Nevertheless he is not a caricature and his actions are all plausible, just not acceptable to most people. The real drama in the novel, however, is how Joe deals with his recognition of

Proctor. He swore he would kill Ellie's killer if he ever came across him but he doesn't have it in him (thank goodness or we wouldn't get another book in the series). He is crippled with guilt - he saw Proctor that day and didn't tell anyone. Could he have saved Ellie? Whatever, he is now determined to nail Proctor by any means, legal or otherwise. Mr White does a good job of portraying his turmoil and mental anguish.

The Domino Killer is an absorbing read and I have no hesitation in recommending it.

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### **Jackie Roche says**

I would like to thank NetGalley and the publishers for giving me the opportunity to read this book in return for an honest and open review.

Although this is the third book in the series I read it as a stand-alone thriller. I will certainly read books 1 and 2 as I've become quite fond of brothers Sam and Joe.

They were drawn to their present careers as a policeman and a prosecutor following the murder of their younger sister Ellie.

I enjoyed this book for so many different reasons. Sam is a very likeable character who gets on well with most people. Joe, however, can be unstable at times. I must admit I do like characters that are not perfect. The story is set around Manchester, which is an area I know quite well. I still learned some interesting snippets about the city.

This is a book that will grab you from the start. If you're looking for a dark, mysterious read full of twists and turns and with a great writing style, this is certainly the book for you.

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### **Best Crime Books & More says**

I have read a couple of Neil White's books but chose this as I thought it was a standalone. What I didn't realise was this is book 3 in a new series featuring Sam and Joe Parker. Luckily having not read the first two made no difference as there is plenty of background on the characters and relevant parts of the storyline so you don't feel you are missing anything. Sam Parker the first brother is a Manchester copper, and a family man. His brother Joe is a criminal prosecutor and although the brothers remain loyal to each other you can tell from the early stages things are strained between them.

Sam is called to a man that had been beaten to death in a park and it takes little time to identify the victim. However what baffles Sam is that the victim's fingerprints were also found on a knife at an old crime scene. What seems like an innocuous enough discovery, is actually a huge problem which starts to open a can of worms for everybody involved. Sam is on the other side of town having been called to a station to represent a client. Meeting that client, also starts a chain of events that Sam has no control over.

It's difficult to say too much more about the storyline as to do so ruins it somewhat for people that haven't read it yet. What I will say is that both Sam and Joe's past comes back to haunt both of them and it invariably leads to both of them taking risks that may cost them everything. Joe was definitely my preferred character of the two, but Sam was certainly readable...just a bit prickly. I also liked the introduction of Joe's colleague Gina. It seemed like as the story progresses there just came another layer of questions.

This was certainly a very enjoyable book and packed full of action. Although not necessary I wish that I had read the first two in the series to give me a bit of background on Sam and Joe. A very enjoyable read and I will look forward to the next one.

## Paromjit says

This is the third in the Parker brothers series, but the first one that I have read. It is an intense rollercoaster ride set in Manchester. Joe is a lawyer and Sam is a cop. Haunting the brothers is the murder of their sister, Ellie. Joe feels shame and guilt because he saw her killer and never revealed this fact to anyone. He is called to represent a client at the police station and is shocked to recognise him as Ellie's murderer. Joe has always promised himself that if he found the killer that he would kill him.

DC Sam Parker is at a crime scene where a man has been bludgeoned to death with a hammer. It is the latest in a number of unsolved murders in the city. Joe is struggling to fight his demons and starts to find out as much as he can about his client and resorts to following him. This leads him to stumble across another murder. His paralegal, Gina, headed the police murder investigation of Ellie's murder, and she finds herself caught up in the present day developments. DCI Brabham, a man more interested in his media profile than getting stuck into the actual investigations begins to use the term the 'Domino' killer to explain the killings. Joe tells Sam about seeing their sister's murderer, which leads to Sam delving deeper and finding connections with Ellie's killer and his current murder cases. This is an incredibly murky investigation which brings danger and is packed with major twists and a gripping finale.

This is an atmospheric and intricate read with complex characterisation, particularly that of Joe who is full of the need for revenge and having to find the means to handle the heavy emotions and guilt. I particularly liked the strong sense of Manchester, its history and architecture, in the book. Whilst it worked as a standalone for me, I would suggest that readers begin with the first book to get a better griip on the characters. Many thanks to Little, Brown for an ARC.

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## Gary says

This is the 3rd book in the Joe and Sam Parker series by author Neil White. I had previously read the 1st book so I was already familiar with the background to this novel so I settled into it fairly quickly.

The two main characters are brothers, Joe who is a Defence Lawyer and Sam is a Detective Constable. The book opens when a man is found beaten to death in a local Manchester park and Detective Constable Sam Parker is one of the investigating officers. Sam identifies the victim and at first it appears to be a straightforward case, but events start to unravel when the victims fingerprints are identified as the same as one's found on a knife at another crime scene, a month earlier.

Joe Parker holds a dark secret, he saw the face of his sisters murderer 17 years ago and didn't act on it, so when he comes face to face with the same man again he struggles to control his feelings.

The more you read of this book the better it gets and you end up wanting to find out more but at the same time not wanting it to end. A great read and certainly an author I will read more of.

I would like to thank Net Galley and Little, Brown Book Group UK for supplying a copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

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## Paul says

## The Domino Killer – So Many Twists

The Domino Killer by Neil White is the third in the Parker Trilogy series based in Manchester, but this was my introduction to the Parker brothers. I can say that you do not need to have read the previous books as The Domino Killer is able to stand on its own as an exciting crime thriller with some wonderful twists. Neil White has written a very clever book that hooks you from the first page and you cannot help yourself as you cannot put this book down.

The Parker brothers work within the criminal justice system in Greater Manchester, Joe is a criminal defence lawyer with a stellar reputation and Sam is a detective in the Major Incident Team in Manchester which includes murder. Both work within the system as they want to find the answers to the unsolved murder of their younger sister Ellie some seventeen years previously and whether they can ever solve that mystery and set their own minds at ease for finally getting justice for her.

The book opens with a bloody murder in a park on the outskirts of Manchester which was quite brutal and Sam is trying to work out what happened and why. When a fingerprint of the victim turned up at a previous unconnected murder the domino effect begins to take place. With another murder in another part of Manchester nothing seems to make sense but only when murder has taken place do things start to fall in to place for Sam.

Joe is called out to a Police Station to represent a client who has been arrested for stealing and burning his own car but will not say why. When Joe meets his client Joe is sure he has seen this person before and is it really a coincident that he has requested him as his lawyer. Joe knows he needs to investigate himself further about this mysterious client he has and in the vain hope he can get some answers.

Joe's client really is the bogey man and is at the heart of this thriller and how he acts is very calculated and enough to send a shiver down most spines. Throughout the thriller you look at his client and wonder how he can be so charming yet so evil and his complete disregard for his own wife.

As the thriller picks up pace you really think that things cannot get any worse for the Parker brothers as they chase the truth and the twisted central character seems to be able to get away with whatever he chooses. The clever thing about this thriller there are plenty of twists some of which you can see coming but others really surprise you.

The Domino Killer is an excellent crime thriller that can be read as a standalone book that delivers on all levels for the reader. With a really twisted character at the heart of the book and the relationship of the Parker brothers makes for a really pulsating read. Neil White's writing is excellent at the way he is able to draw you in and leave you wanting more, hoping for the best but expecting the worse.

Read the The Domino Killer and immerse yourself in the lives of the Parker Brothers as they race to solve the case and end their own mystery of seventeen years. This really is a fantastic read that drives you mad because you cannot put the book down and leaves you wanting more.

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## Emma says

I have never read anything by Neil White before, meeting the characters for this first time in this novel, but this did not impact my understanding or enjoyment. Both Joe and Sam were interesting people in their own right, as two very different brothers, they provide a fantastic contrast in viewpoint. The plot was clever and

kept up the tension throughout. I was never certain what would happen next and that is a refreshing change. Heartily recommended.

Arc via Netgalley.

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## **Craig Sisterson says**

Some crime novels grab you immediately, with an obviously distinctive style, character or premise. Others grow on you as the pages turn, as you get deeper into the story and characters. For me **THE DOMINO KILLER**, Neil White's ninth crime novel (and third to star the Parker brothers), fell into the latter category, going from 'hmm... promising, I'm intrigued' to 'I'm really enjoying this' to 'ah, very nicely done - I'll definitely be back for more' as I followed along the story.

It all starts with an unassuming man waiting on a park bench in Manchester as night falls, flowers in hand: hopeful, nervous, and expectant. But rather than a first date or secret lover, he's met with a hammer. Detective Constable Sam Parker of Manchester's Major Incident Team is assigned to the murder, which at first seems as random and unexplained as it is vicious and bloody. Meanwhile Sam's brother Joe, who also works within the criminal justice system, but 'on the other side' as a criminal defence counsel, is electrified when he looks into the eyes of his newest client; a man with a clean record who's accused of stealing his own car from the police impound, only to later torch it. Joe is certain he's seen those eyes before - on a teenage face who glanced at 18-year-old Joe before following Joe's little sister Ellie down a path that was a short-cut home; Ellie was never seen alive again, an incident that's haunted Joe, Sam, and others for 17 years.

Neil White can tell a gripping crime tale, but for me it is really the relationships between his characters and the ways in which they respond to events where he excels most. I hadn't read any of his Parker brothers books before, so I didn't have any background to the characters and 'came in clean', so to speak.

Perhaps because of this, at the beginning I found myself enjoying **THE DOMINO KILLER**, and intrigued by what was going on and what might happen (White sets the hooks well), without being particularly blown away. The book fits nicely into the British police procedural subgenre - of which there are a sea of offerings. White writes in a straightforward style, so the elegance of the plotting and the depth of the characters, in particular, kind of sneaks up on the reader. Or this one, at least. Both Joe and Sam are very interesting characters - the more I got to know them, the more I was curious about them.

White does a terrific job at demonstrating how all sorts of relationships - family, friends, colleagues - can be threatened by past secrets, and how everyone involved doesn't quite know what to think and how to act.

There's a real humanity to the characters in **THE DOMINO KILLER**, despite the book having a particularly disturbing and chilling killer at its core. Life gets messy, people make mistakes... so what do you do then?

Overall, **THE DOMINO KILLER** is a very enjoyable read that gets tenser and more layered as it goes along. The litmus test: would I read more about the Parker brothers in future? Absolutely.

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## **Bookread2day says**

Review by [www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)

As author Neil White is a lawyer by day and a writer by night, he certainly understands the power of an action packed story.

Dangerous liaisons are rolled out in every chapter it leaves you wondering who next will die.

A married man in a suit and patent shoes sitting in a Manchester park holding Calla lily flowers is murdered. The police believe he was having a romantic meeting with someone. The police need to break the news to his wife and piece different parts of his life to recreate his final week.

Meanwhile Joe Parker a lawyer often has to visit the police station, which sometimes could be disruptive to life. The visits either took place during office hours or at some awful time of the night. Joe is called to a man Mark Proctor who the police have held as Mark stole his uninsured car from a police vehicle compound. Joe's memory of knowing Mark Proctor all comes back to him. Mark had been the man who killed Joe's sister. Joe had promised himself if he ever found who killed Ellie he was going to kill him. A devastatingly good troubling crime thriller.

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