



Unhappy Families

Oliver Tidy

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Dover CID is enjoying a period of relative calm.

That is until DI Tom Romney gets linked with a disturbing find in a dead man's flat; DS Joy Marsh gets involved with things that go bump in the night; DC Peter Grimes gets friendly with a ride-along author; DC Derek Spicer gets drunk and Superintendent Vine gets taken in by a ruse.

Can the members of Dover CID come through their individual trials unscathed or is it the end of the line for someone?

The Romney and Marsh Files now number six (nearly seven). They don't have to be read in order; they do all work as stand-alone novels. However, to get the most out of each it is recommended that they are consumed in the order in which they were prepared, a bit like the courses of a good meal. (Who wants to eat ice-cream before a bowl of soup?)

Here are the books of the series in order:

- #1 Rope Enough
- #2 Making a Killing
- #3 Joint Enterprise
- #4 A Dog's Life
- #5 Particular Stupidities
- #6 Unhappy Families
- #7 A White-Knuckle Christmas (In production.)

Unhappy Families Details

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From Reader Review Unhappy Families for online ebook

Kirsty says

Back to his entertaining best with this one. Well done Mr T.

D a Kay M kay says

Another great read from Mr tidy .

Fast moving detective story . Multiple. Cases , believable character s . I have all the Romney and Marsh stories so far ,can't wait for the next book

Amy Peck says

English breakfast, a cuppa, and the best carrot cake

I dinged Mr Tidy's last Romney and Marsh outing, Particular Stupidities, for Romney's behavior as an arse throughout the book. In this story, though, the tone is completely different - it's a more subdued, dare I say thoughtful, DI Romney. Instead of one major case driving the plot, Dover CID is a bit slow. There are just a few seemingly minor incidents to investigate and an order from on high that they allow a celebrity author (of police procedurals, of course) to tag along for a few days. But first off there's a "friend's" funeral for Romney to attend.

David Gilchrist says

Unhappy Families.. A true 5* review

This is the best work to date by this author, it meets all my criteria for a 5* review. Humour, at times you will laugh with this book, sadness there will be time you want to cry. The book flows well, you will not want to put this book down. DI Romney is a better and more likeable character than in previous books but still Romney. DS Joy Marsh is a stronger more outspoken and rounded character better balancing the natures of them both. I loved the link to Booker and Cash Oliver Tidys other series set in Dymchurch Kent. This a really good book, I will soon be reading this again in not the too distant future. If you are a British crime reader then this book is a must read for you.

Martin challis says

Another triumph

This series gets better and better. Unusually, we have a slow start here but once the stories develop, it gains pace and you find it difficult to put down. Some great scenes when my heart rate was noticeably rising. Pleasant overlap with the Booker and Cash series too, even if Booker seemed a lot more friendly than in his own series! Thanks Oliver, hopefully more to come.

Sarah says

Another great murder mystery from Mr Tidy with so many slippery plot twists and turns, it rivals those of the Cresta Run. Cannot say how much I am loving this series.

Nancy Brown says

Mr Tidy hits another home run!

What an amazing ride this book gives. Never expect routine in the Dover CID. Romney, Marsh and all are nearly lost to us by many goings on in their private and personal lives. Shocking ghost sightings, pedophiles on the loose, plus who is stealing lawnmowers? Find out the answers with a shocking and sad outcome.

Linda Gilchrist says

I have read my first book by oliver tidy have enjoyed it and will be reading another one

Marie Shirley Griffin says

Best of a wonderful series

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It had excellent characters, all three dimensional. Very clever mysteries, as it about a CID station.

I really hope the author will write a seventh book. I am just not ready to let Romney and Marsh go.

Meg says

Another excellent twisty mystery for the Dover CID. As usual, the setting is detailed so well you will think you are in Dover, cold and wet. The characters are developing nicely. I liked the extra focus on Superintendent Vine and the quick check in with March's boyfriend.

Karen says

Beginning with a funeral, and an unfortunate but darkly funny incident regarding the coffin and the gravesite, Romney, Marsh, Grimes, and Spicer of the Dover CID are going about business as usual when they are faced with some unusual business. They find they are hosting a popular crime-writer who wants to learn more about day-to-day police work for his next novel. The author is a nice man who bonds immediately with DC Grimes and proves more helpful than anyone expected. There are also the incidents of the "ghost girl" -- the siting of whom has caused a number of non-fatal road accidents on a road when a hit and run cost a young girl her life months before. They're also looking into a rash of expensive riding lawnmower thefts. Then there's the old lady who has a recurring intruder who takes nothing but just goes away once the old lady sees him... is the intruder real or imagined? Finally, there is the possibility of a pedophile ring in Dover and it centers on Romney favorite informant. Weirdness is the name of the game and the Dover CID can handle it!!

Tidy writes a funny, intriguing, confusing, heart-wrenching, suspenseful, and fascinating mystery. He had me laughing at one moment, on the edge of my seat the next, and in tears frequently. The emotional roller coaster was perfect. I'm looking forward to the next book in the series.

Nathan Hill says

BRILLIANT

I chose this rating because I enjoyed reading this book from start to finish. I love this team and I am sorry that Peter Grimes has gone he will be hard to replace. I have read all of the Romney and Marsh books and look forward to the next one. Thank you Mr Tidy for this interesting series.

Elaine Tomasso says

Unhappy Families is another great read from Mr Tidy as his Romney and Marsh series goes from strength to strength. The novel starts with very little happening for Dover CID. Romney attends Sammy Croker's funeral, Marsh visits an old lady who frightens off the same intruder when they come face to face and Grimes is investigating some ride on lawnmower thefts. Then Boudicca, aka Superintendent Vine, unleashes the crime writer, James Peters, on them for a two day ride along. Rather than snubbing him, to the surprise of the team, Romney welcomes him with open arms as he has a newly discovered urge to write a crime novel. Unhappy Families is a roller coaster ride of a read emotionally with some genuine laugh out loud moments and some really tearful ones too (read it and find out). It is not a whodunnit as it is more a series of small crimes which could escalate to something more serious if not nipped in the bud but each storyline has something to offer and makes it a very compulsive whole.

After the events of Particular Stupidities, which I recommend you read first to give you a rounder picture of Unhappy Families, Romney has turned over a new leaf, forswearing booze, cigs and women in favour of clean living and exercise. It seems to make him a nicer person but all hope is not lost as the slippery slope beckons and the suit he dieted to get into tightens. I am pleased to see Joy Marsh developing as a person. Her domestic situation has settled on a more even keel with Justin, her boyfriend, making more appearances and she is a more confident presence at the station although she's not sure how to take the comparison made by several people of her to Romney and his methods.

In direct contrast to the title there is a real feel good factor to this novel which makes it a joy to read. I am not alone in this as I notice that Unhappy Families was highlighted by www.crimefictionlover.com last week as a new release to look out for.

If you want an absorbing, mostly lighthearted read then I heartily recommend Unhappy Families.

Sarah says

Maybe 3.5 stars. I did enjoy this 6th novel, a true page-turner, but had a few problems with it...

First the choice of names: James Meakins, James Peters and Peter Grimes. I later realised that the first two had to have the same first name, but I got a bit confused about the similarities at first.

Then, near the end, a young boy is arrested: no one seems to know who he is and he doesn't introduce himself, but suddenly Joy starts calling him Norman Price. Have I.D. cards suddenly been made compulsory in the U.K.?

There were four cases interwoven, which all contributed to a good plot structure. However, I couldn't work out what happened about the lawnmower case. The end of that one was very dramatic, but whatever happened to the bad guy? Did I miss something?

Entertaining but not great. Perhaps I am tiring a little of this series because I would like to see the characters develop a bit more and move forward.

Gary Van Cott says

I think this is the best book in the series. The author has toned down the polemics a bit and they are generally related to the plot.
