



Blood Sympathy

Reginald Hill

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The author of Recalled to Life introduces a new series and a new sleuth. Balding, middle-aged black Joe Sixsmith of Luton, Beds., U.K., takes his first case--a crazy family who have gotten themselves mixed up in murder.

Blood Sympathy Details

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Author : Reginald Hill

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From Reader Review Blood Sympathy for online ebook

Bettie? says

Read by Simon Williamson: 8 Hours

Description: *PI can mean many things, but can it really mean a balding, middle-aged redundant lathe operator from a high rise in Luton, Beds? Joe Sixsmith thinks it can. His Aunt Mirabelle thinks you'd have to be crazy to hire him, and Joe's current clients certainly fit the bill. One seems to be confessing to the brutal murder of his whole family; another thinks she's a witch. Alongside them, the two heavies who believe Joe is hiding their illicit drugs seem almost normal.*

This is a step up from recent encounters with Spillane and Cleeves. I immediately liked Sixsmith, a middle-aged, balding British born man of colour with the cat who has a white eye-patch. Luton as setting was also a plus. I have more of this series hanging about and look forward to them.

3* A Clubbable Woman (Dalziel & Pascoe, #1)

3* Ruling Passion (Dalziel & Pascoe, #3)

3* A Killing Kindness (Dalziel & Pascoe, #6)

3* Bones and Silence (Dalziel & Pascoe, #11)

3* The Woodcutter

3* Blood Sympathy (Joe Sixsmith, #1)

Kathy says

A very funny detective story - with fine cat humor.

Dana Stabenow says

Great characterization, worth it for the way Joe does the crossword puzzle alone.

Melissa says

This contains enough casual racism to make the modern progressive reader weary (in fact I was surprised to see that it was written in 1993 since it seems way more dated than that), but besides all that, it is also really, really funny, so it's got that going for it.

Susan says

In the first of a series, we meet Joe Sixsmith, a black British ex-machinist turned private investigator. Joe's beer-drinking cat is his sidekick, and in this short book, they deal with a number of cases as best they can while fending off the match-making efforts of Joe's aunt. At least, Joe (and his author) have a sense of humor.

Helen says

Not hardboiled after all. Rather nice, serendipitous

Grey Wolf says

This was surprisingly excellent! The pink cover almost made me not borrow it from the library, but there was nothing girly about the story. I have no idea if Luton has any of the places he mentions within it, in fact reading the disclaimer on the front maybe it doesn't, but the IDEA of these places is the same idea as Walford or Sunhill, and fitted the grittiness of the story.

The hero is a fun guy, with a cat. I can relate to cats. After a few misadventures turn out OK, you know he's going to get through to the end in some sort of triumph, but the joy is finding out how.

This story reminded me in many ways of Douglas Adams' *Dirk Gently*, and I read it in one sitting, at night, finishing at 01:30am, so that should be a recommendation of itself!

Susan says

I love the world of Joe Sixsmith. I love all the characters, his cases and their solutions (outstanding), his cat (what a cat!), and even how his personal life is interwoven with his investigations.

Yes, I'm in love with this series. We were meant for each other. Sigh!

Kirsty Derbyshire says

Fun stuff. Having read so many of the Dalziel and Pascoe books I know that Hill can turn his hand to any kind of story he likes so I wasn't afraid of trying his non Dalziel and Pascoe books. This is a different kind of crime book, I was never too sure how close to reality we were - it's a bit of a farce, a bit of a caper, a lot of a funny crime novel and mainly just very enjoyable to read.

And I love the message in the front: "This novel is set in a town called Luton in Bedfordshire which has nothing to do with the town called Luton in Bedfordshire.", or words to that effect. That's kind of the way the humour in the book goes too. I'll be back for more of Joe Sixsmith.

Cindy says

This is the 1st book in his Joe Sixsmith series. I read them all. I love this series - the main character (Joe) is a short, black, balding private eye in UK. He was 'made redundant' at his old factory job and decided to try being a private eye. He drives around in this ancient British auto and often takes his cat, Whitey, along. The cat will go to his favorite pub w/Joe and lap up beer from a saucer under the table. If Joe gets called on a case, Whitey may stay behind and get sozzled. I read the Joe Sixsmith series maybe 10 years ago and recently re-read it. They are that good. And don't forget the bossy, naggy aunt who sings in the choir w/Joe - she's always pushing nice marriageable 'girls' at him.

Hayley Shaver says

This was a great, funny book. Joe Sixsmith is a regular, run of the mill Private Investigator who lives with his cat. The most exciting thing that has come across his desk for a while is a request for him to prove a spouse is cheating. One day that all changes. In a series of astonishing coincidences, he finds three sets of clients that will lead him right into the middle of a complex investigation. A man comes into his office saying he needs to report he knows a murder will happen because he dreamed of it. A lady comes into his office and asks whether she can be helped because her husband is being held in an immigration mix up. A lady who believes she is a witch and someone is out to get her (another witch) asks for a small favor. Can Joe see the connections between these people and their cases before his life -- and the lives of those he loves -- are placed in imminent danger? Or is it too late already?

Jocelyn says

I read the books years ago and really loved them. I wanted to read them again but sadly they cannot be found except in audio. And it's brilliant!

Tony says

Loved this series. This is probably not the best of them, I'd say that prize goes to the final book.

Great character and great stories.

Martyn Lovell says

This is not so much a detective mystery as a serendipity mystery; the whole experience of Joe Sixsmith reminds me of Inspectors Clouseau or Gadget, although the hero of this book is not so much dumb/incompetent as just lucky and decent.

The writing style is very light and the plotline is not much more dense. The book begins by dumping several unrelated problems in Joe's lap, and he spends the rest of the book untangling them. He does so in an amusing and satisfying way.

Reginald Hill is the author of the much more famous Dalziel and Pascoe books - made into an excellent TV series. Perhaps this explains why someone gave me this book so long ago that I can't even remember? I certainly didn't buy it, and my edition is a very old UK one.

While this was enjoyable, there wasn't a lot of depth, nor quite enough fun to keep me begging for more. A decent read, but not a classic.

Richard says

I enjoyed this. I liked the humor and the characters are quite endearing.

The plotting is extremely half-assed though, which probably doesn't bode well for the rest of the series. That's a shame because the prose itself is strong.

(And is it even possible to slit the throats of four sober people while they all sit around the tea table? I'm going to say definitely not, although this doesn't seem to bother any of the detectives on the case.)
