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Chump Change

G.M. Ford

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Sometimes it's the things you don't do that come back to haunt you, just as surely as some questions are best left unanswered.

When "Leo" is the last word a stranger speaks, the Seattle private eye launches himself into a search for answers. Not only does the dead man have a connection to Leo's past, but he was also worth millions—and some very dangerous people know it. Before long, Leo is caught between warring factions in a high-stakes game of mayhem and murder, and his search for answers becomes a quest for justice. Turns out, finding the truth is far more painful than Leo ever imagined, and the price for uncovering it just might be his life.

Chump Change Details

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From Reader Review Chump Change for online ebook

Suzanne says

Another Gem

Mr. Ford has shown us growth and new twists with his characters while maintaining their charm and entertainment value. I am looking forward to the next visit with Leo & company.

Darcey Tomasino says

Four chapters?

Excessively long chapters are a pet peeve for me. Although four chapters in 260+ book is annoying, the writing and plot are worth five stars. This series is entertaining and highly recommended.

Patricia says

YAH! DAT ISS ONE GOOT BOOK!

Leo Waterman always makes me want to hear a good Northern European accent, somehow, and this book is no exception.. It's a fantastic read, with the standard overblown characters that make G M Ford's books rock. Even the new characters step fully grown from the page, the good ones as American good as apple pie, the evil characters built of something purely vile and nasty that chars the edges of the page. It takes a lot of suspense, and some nastiness, for Ford to wrap up the book and hand us the end, with the pertinent loose ends dealt with, and some old loose ends visible again. This ensures that the series continues....

Ed says

#8 in the Leo Waterman series. Leo re-emerged, after a 12 year hiatus, in Thicker Than Water (2012) and here he is again to show that was not a one time fluke. He re-establishes a relationship, of sorts, with Rebecca although he has a current affair going with Rachel. His band of irregulars makes a welcome, brief appearance, though the majority of this entry takes place in far Eastern Washington far from their Seattle haunts. And after Leo breaks a cop's nose and gets him fired to start the book, he winds up taking him on a road trip that results in a friendship. I love this character and hope this series has a long way to go.

Leo Waterman series - For years Leo Waterman eked out a meager living as a PI in Seattle. But when Rebecca, the love of his life, dumped him to marry someone else, Leo retires. Until one day he learns that Rebecca has vanished and no one can locate her. Together with a motley crew of homeless drunks and reprobates, Leo sets out to find Rebecca. He follows her trail from the streets of Seattle to the great North Woods. Rebecca's new husband's lies cast Leo into the path of a ruthless gang that will stop at nothing to

protect what's theirs. Will Leo survive and find Rebecca?

Greg Tymn says

This is the first Leo Waterman novel that I have read and I will definitely be reading more. It contained everything I look for in a mystery novel: solid characters, a strong protagonist, evil bad guys, lots of action and a compelling story. In addition, I found the story stripped to essentials....which is a very good thing. I can't count the number of excellent authors who don't know when to stop writing. Whether this is Mr. Ford's preference or the hand of a strong editor, I appreciate the lack of fluff.

One area kept this from being a 5-star review: Weapons. The S&W 38spl revolvers do not have safeties. A Glock 17 has a "safe action" but does not have a manual thumb safety. I've never heard of a Mossad AX9 in .223....perhaps they exist, but I do not know of one. If you are going to put a weapon in the hands of the good guys or bad guys and it purports to be a "real" firearm, it's worth the 20 minutes it would take to check facts. I know, this is a pet peeve, but there are millions of gun owners out there. Buy one a beer and let them edit your descriptions at the bar.

Donna Davis says

From within the crowded field of mystery, crime thriller, and detective fiction writers, there are three still living who can make me laugh out loud without missing a beat or slowing the pace of a damn fine novel. GM Ford is one of them. (For the curious: James Lee Burke and Sue Grafton are the others.)

I celebrate whenever one of his novels, which had become something of a rarity in recent years, is published, and because of their whimsical yet biting nature, I prefer the Leo Waterman series to the excellent but not funny Frank Corso series.

Had this one not come up like a gift waiting to be unwrapped on Net Galley, it would have been on my Mother's Day wish list.

When in Seattle, what should one do when a crime is being committed—whether property related or violent—within one's view, or even to oneself? The knee jerk reaction is to call the cops; as Ford reminds us, we grew up expecting "Officer Friendly" to turn up with his big muscles and righteous justice, brimming with yearning to help the oppressed and exact justice. But that's a myth. And right now, when SPD is in such hot water for its gratuitous use of violence that the FBI is monitoring its cops and the Justice Department is telling the new mayor that it's not okay to substitute additional training in place of discipline, this novel could not have been better timed. Waterman falls for the 911 plea for assistance gambit twice, though he is old enough to know better. Chaos ensues both times, of course. When justice comes, it is because of the protagonist's smarts and his excellent connections in other places.

Much of this novel is set on the Eastern side of the Cascades, out in wheat country near the Idaho border. And there, his fictional cops are about the same as those everywhere in the US of A: easily greased by the squeaky wheels that have the most resources. The gloves are off; the veneer of political correctness that

sometimes hides the scruffier side of law enforcement in the state's alpha city is nowhere to be seen way out there in good ol' boy country.

Once again, Ford uses what would ordinarily be considered a trite device toward the story's climax, but stews it in enough crazy juice to make it absolutely brand new. The only mitigation of my joy was in noting how few pages of the story remained.

I also appreciated what he does with his side kick character, who has done a really bad thing, but who is young enough to redeem himself in a fresh situation. The measures of forgiveness and caution are well played.

I hope this marvelous book will receive enough publicity and promotion for Ford's work to be appreciated by a wider audience than local folk. He deserves it. Just as I enjoy a journey to Louisiana or Montana through the pages of Burke's literature, or to Southern California through Grafton's, so should everyone, including those who read the New York Times, be treated to a taste of Leo Waterman and the misty yet gritty city he calls home.

Rhonda says

I love the Leo Waterman series. This episode takes the reader out of the usual Seattle setting, and into a case of some really bad guys, out to hurt some good people. There's mystery, excitement, danger, young love, and humor in this rollicking good time.

Joseph says

A Leo Waterman mystery. Leo is caught up in a murder investigation that may threaten his life.

Coreen Arioto says

Chump Change

What a great mystery I love your writing style. This my 2nd book I've read of yours. You make me want to read everyone of your books. There's never a dull moment something's always in motion never a dull moment. Thanks !!!

Jennie says

This one takes Leo out of Seattle and asks me to suspend far, far too much disbelief. I did okay with it until the last quarter of the book, then had to skim my way through some very unlikely-bordering-on-completely-

ridiculous bits. I think too many years have gone by for me to get my pleasure in this series back.

Janice says

8th in the Leo Waterman series. Gritty, but a very good story with great characters.

Lee says

Good to see Leo back in action

I read "Thicker Than Water", at the end of the year. That was his first Leo tale in 12 years. Nice to have the big wise guy back.

D says

This is apparently the 8th book in the Leo Waterman series, but it's the first one I've read. The title and by line caught my eye in an Amazon add, plus it was on sale for \$4.99, so I grabbed it.

It's great! Leo recently inherited money from a crooked political father so his PI business had become a hobby, not a profession. Yet he gets hooked into a strange and dangerous case when someone he knew briefly breaks into a house next to the one he's sitting with his girlfriend. A fight ensues, the police show up, and the poor burgler gets tasered to death - but as he dies, he calls out Leo's name!

It's some time before Leo figures out who he is, but when it dawns on him, he's hooked. He needs to find out what happened to this nice, if somewhat bumbling and naive man. Especially since he didn't step out and help him a number of years ago when he so clearly needed it. Guilt, and the mysterious circumstances, are intriguing and Leo has just the right experience, connections, and resources to do something this time.

There's lots of actions. The mystery part isn't really too mysterious. It's the characters that make the book. They're easy to like and care about, the bad guys are really bad, they've got the good guys in a real bind, and Leo's just the guy to stand up to them. A lot happens quickly, and I wound up turning pages until late in the night to find out what happens next.

It's not Pulitzer Prize material - but it's a fun read, a good book for what it is. I liked it enough that I'm going to make a point of reading the earlier books in this series.

Wanda says

I received this book free from Goodreads First Reads and really enjoyed it. I love how the author gives the "bums" some humanity. He shows that even though most people think of them as worthless that they still have some value. Also liked the fact that the young cop was given a second chance after making a mistake. It is amazing how much physical abuse Leo goes thru and still manages to hang in there. He is aware of his own

flaws and doesn't really sugar coat them.

Shows how someone could possibly dominate a small town with enough money. Interesting side note about how a town can become divided by the proposed casino. On one hand it could bring some prosperity with jobs but on the other hand it could also bring in the wrong kind of people and most of the money would be in the hands of few people. The way the project was rammed thru also is destructive to the area and the people. Liked the fact that Leo was on the side of the underdog as usual and fought to the end to find the truth but did spare that truth from injuring some people's feelings.

Cathy Ryan says

4.5 stars

After years of struggling to make ends meet as a Seattle PI, Leo Waterman recently inherited the trust fund from his late father's less than legal dealings and has lapsed into semi-retirement, although he can't quite come to terms with having such a large sum of unearned wealth. His thoughts and feelings show a conscious awareness of himself and give a roundness to his character.

This story has our hero involved in a new relationship and life is going well. Until there's a burglary at the house next door to where he and his girlfriend are house sitting. The arrival of the police result in the death of a man whose last word was Leo's name. It seems Leo and retirement don't mix, especially when the realisation hits he was acquainted with the dead man. And the more he learns, the more answers he wants and the deeper the investigation pulls him in.

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