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**Håkan Nesser**

**Woman With Birthmark (Inspector Van Veeteren #4)**

Title: Woman With Birthmark (Inspector Van Veeteren #4)

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## Description

"Having come thus far in his deliberations, Van Veeteren gave in to temptation and lit a cigarette. It was time to address the big question, and that would no doubt need a bit of extra effort. "

"Why? "

"Why in hell's name should anybody march up to somebody's door, ring the bell and shoot whoever opened it?"

A young woman shivers in the December cold as her mother's body is laid to rest in a cemetery. The only thing that warms her is the thought of the revenge she will soon take . . .

Then a middle-aged man is killed at his home, shot twice in the chest and twice below the belt. He had recently received a series of bizarre phone calls where an old song is played down the line - evoking an eerie sense of both familiarity and unease. Before the police can find the culprit, a second man is killed in the same way.

Chief Inspector Van Veeteren and his team must dig far back into each man's past - but with few clues at each crime scene, can they find the killer before anyone else dies?

## Insightful reviews

Maria João Fernandes: "Há males que vêm por bem."

Depois de mais de 30 anos, um segredo horrível vai, finalmente, ser desvendado. Será agora feita a justiça, que foi ignorada no passado?

O quarto livro da série do Inspector Van Veeteren começa com um funeral de uma mulher, ao qual apenas a sua solitária filha assiste. Dias antes do Natal, ao lado da campa da sua mãe, a mulher de 29 anos reflecte sobre a vida miserável da progenitora, tão semelhante à sua, e promete vingança àqueles que considera responsáveis pelos dois destinos miseráveis. Assim, é pelo olhar da assassina que obtemos a primeira imagem de mais um enredo genial de Håkan Nesser. O escritor sueco é habilidoso e não esconde nem por um instante o que nos espera.

Foi com prazer que reencontrei o Van Veeteren! A assassina iniciou a sua missão e o inspector é acordado pelo som estridente do telefone, às 07:55 de Sábado, em Janeiro. Este mês é alvo de desdém por se prolongar indefinidamente, sempre com chuva ou neve, garantido um total de apenas uma hora e meia de sol ao fim dos 31 dias! A par dos meses de Inverno, o inspector sente um ódio crescente pelo telefone. Destino ou coincidência, o nosso protagonista vê-se com uma constipação que teima em ficar.

"Cherchez la femme, if you really must."

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A investigação prolonga-se por dois meses e caracteriza-se por falta de pistas, testemunhas, ligação entre as vítimas e motivo. A assassina mantém-se fiel à sua missão e o seu método de matar é o que a define. A par do seu trabalho - nada fácil - Van Veeteren continua a jogar badminton com o seu melhor amigo Münster, xadrez e a ouvir música clássica para descontrair e também reflectir. Em acréscimo, depois da operação bem-sucedida ao cancro, o Inspector Chefe sente um desejo cada vez maior de ter um estilo de vida mais saudável, pois fuma e bebe em demasia! Apesar da melhoria nesta sua atitude perante a sua saúde, a vontade ainda não é suficiente para colocar o novo estilo de vida em prática. Contudo, tenho confiança no bom senso deste homem de meia idade!

A resolução deste caso conta ainda com toda a equipa que já conhecemos. A Jung e Ewa Moreno, a única mulher da equipa, juntam-se dois grandes homens que merecem destaque.

Münster é o colega preferido e melhor amigo de Van Veeteren. Contrariamente a ele tem uma vida familiar feliz e uma paciência enorme que o habilita como o homem ideal para aturar o humor sensível e complexo do Inspector. É de salientar que continua a ganhar todos os jogos de badminton, tal como o perdedor continua a justificar as derrotas com o seu estilo de vida errado ou raquete velha.

Reinhart, com qual Van Veeteren se identifica, desempenha neste livro um papel importante, sendo as suas excelentes competências policiais evidenciadas. Para além disso, ficamos a conhecer este homem lacónico um pouco melhor, tendo acesso aos seus pensamentos sobre a sua vida privada e conhecendo a mulher por quem se apaixonou, tenciona casar e ter filhos, apesar de já passar da meia idade. É de salientar as conversas entre os dois, após o sexo, sobre a investigação corrente. Afinal de contas, por trás de um grande homem há sempre uma grande mulher.

"Hope lives eternal."

A história é trágica e as suas implicações têm um impacto que fica connosco mesmo após a leitura. É com naturalidade que o escritor sueco nos conta esta história triste e, de certa forma, deprimente, através do tom de humor inigualável, já tão característico seu. Nenhuma personagem é secundária e as relações entre a equipa policial são estimulantes. Håkan Nesser tem o dom de nos fazer rir nas situações mais tensas, mostrando o lado mais humano dos seus inspectores que lidam com os acontecimentos e pessoas mais obscuras.

Tal como os livros anteriores, também "Woman With A Birthmark" envolve o leitor a um nível quase surreal. Håkan Nesser tem um estilo inconfundível e considero-o um autor excêntrico, no melhor sentido da palavra. Longe de se enquadrar dentro dos padrões considerados normais deste género narrativo, explora o mundo do crime e o oposto que o combate, de um forma excepcional, focando-se nos detalhes mais ínfimos e sempre relevantes.

Confesso que não resisti e iniciei a leitura do livro seguinte "The Inspector and Silence" antes de escrever este comentário. Adianto desde já que fiquei, como sempre, rendida desde a primeira página. Desde a primeira palavra, permitam-me a correcção.

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Apenas alguns meses após a investigação do livro "Woman With A Birthmark", Van Veeteren resolve dar outro rumo à sua vida já tão estimulante, interessante, peculiar e preenchedora. E sinto na atmosfera uma promessa de romance, ou será impressão minha?

"Standing waiting for something that never came."

Mysterytribune: Woman with Birthmark (or in Swedish "Kvinna med födelsemärke") is a 1996 novel by Håkan Nesser, which won the Best Swedish Crime Novel Award in the same year. The English translation of the book was released in 2009 at the time when there was a Swedish Crime Fiction hype in the market. The book has also found its way into Television and a Swedish mini-series covered the novel in 2001.

A brief Summary:

Inspector Van Veeteren and his associates are left bewildered by the curious murder of a man shot twice in the heart and twice below the belt. An utterly dull man, the only suspicious activity his surviving wife can report is a series of peculiar phone calls.

Repeatedly the telephone would ring, offering no answer but an obscure pop song from the 1960s. This siren song would be linked to an identical murder, but the true connection remains unknown.

With a cool, critical eye, Van Veeteren pursues his subject across the country, wading through outrageous leads and fruitless tips in this chilling mystery from master crime novelist Håkan Nesser.

Our Take:

A main plot which instantly absorbs the readers: Several middle aged men are murdered, all shot twice in the heart and twice in the testicles. Although the reader can easily guess that the killer is a woman who is seeking revenge against the victims, the answer to mystery is only revealed when Van Veeteren digs deeply in the past of each of the murdered men.

The book is a fast paced police procedural which at 326 pages, is a relatively quick read. Nesser is a master at dialogue and character development and for those readers who enjoy the cold atmospheric descriptions of Sweden, this book will be an entertaining read.

We somewhat felt sympathetic to the murderer as we learned more about this disturbing tale of revenge. Throughout the story, the dose of suspense in the story is not very high and readers are most of the times ahead of Van Veeteren in at least figuring out the probable motive. However, the suspense picks up at the end and a great twist changes everything: The ending is a surprise shift away from the predictability in the whole story.

There is more at <http://www.mysterytribune.com> or @mysterytribune

Pablos: Od dawna gdzie tylko mam okazję opowiadam jakie to fajne ksi??ki pisze Håkan

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Nesser. Uczciwie przy tym dodaj?, że jednak seria o inspektorze Barbarottim jest sporo ciekawsza niż starsze książki o komisarzu Van Veeterenie. Kolejnym tom przygód tego ostatniego utwierdza mnie w moim przekonaniu. Książka jest na pewno inna od większości kryminałów, ale “tego czego?”, co by?o obecne w praktycznie każdej z pięciu części serii o Barbarottim tu jednak nie ma.

Håkan Nesser zawsze ma do pokazania ciekawy dramat. I dramat prawdziwy, opisany w pierwszej oszczędnie, powoli rozbudowywany, by w końcu uderzył i wywołał u czytelnika prawdziwą depresję. Realizm to mocna strona tego pisarza, plus talent do przedstawiania brutalnego świata tak, że nikt nie ma wątpliwości - tak właśnie świat wygląda. Przy czym Nesser nie jest nachalny ani egzaltowany, nie napawa się własną wizją, co tym lepszy daje efekt.

W przypadku serii o Van Veeterenie pisarz jednak trochę za bardzo zaniedbuje swoich bohaterów. Kryminał bez ciekawej postaci to kryminał saby. O ile sprawca zamieszania w “Kobiecie ze znamieniem” jest niezwykle interesujący, to niestety sam Van Veeteren i jego koledzy to znacznie bardziej tło, niż mocno nakreślone postaci. To już bodajże czwarta książka z serii, a my wciąż nie wiemy jak wyglądało jego małżeństwo, dlaczego doszło do rozwodu, z jakiego powodu jego syn (syn komisarza policji!) spędził tyle czasu w więzieniu. A ja bym chciał wiedzieć, nie wystarczy mi przedstawienie bohatera jako dość twardego, wielce marudnego, bywającego utrapieniem dla współpracowników plus niestety zaledwie średnio uzdolnionego policjanta.

Smutna prawda w przypadku “Kobiety ze znamieniem” wygląda tak, że gdyby to był pisarz mi nieznany, to prawdopodobnie straciłbym zaangażowanie w lekturę. Po ponad połowie wiadomościem sobie, że książka idzie mi tak wolno właśnie dlatego, że bywa zwyczajnie... nudna. Tylko magia nazwiska powodująca, że brnąc dalej, doskonale wiesz, że nawet jeżeli treść jest nudnawa to wyjątkiem z ostatnich stron powieści będzie bardziej niż zadowolające. No i by?o.

Marianne: i used to be particularly impressed, in particular through the final 30 or so pages, whilst every thing had to be tidied up, but if the publication grew to become VERY lyrical and somber. i have by no means learn this sort of nice end to a mystery. This was once my first booklet through Hakan Nesser. i admire mysteries, and my favorites are Henning Mankell, Ruth Rendell, Arnaldur Indridason, Karin Fossum, Morag Joss (For a few unusual reason, I by no means bought into the Dragon Tattoo series) -- i admire the doom and gloom of Scandinavian secret writers. i assume on the grounds that I read, such a lot of years ago, Smilla's experience of Snow. the most personality here, Inspector Van Veeteren, is not as morose as Mankell's Kurt Wallander (but I nonetheless love Mankell). there is nearly as a lot dedicated to part characters -- which I liked. Gave a feeling of the community.

Helen: relaxing (4th in series, which i'm analyzing so as yet might be it truly is less significant with this sequence than with some). out of date police procedural (written in 1996, so it has taken some time to arrive English translation). We know, extra or less, who the assassin is from the start (although we by no means study her name), however the cause - revenge - is printed intimately in simple terms slowly. even though the writer is Swedish the surroundings isn't - it truly is an unidentified eu country, with panorama which does not fit the Netherlands (which it

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another way sounds like). The police staff is filled with eccentricity and dry wit. those books are relatively not anything like different modern Scandinavian crime authors (there's probably a touch of Martin Beck in Van Veeteren, yet much less social comment).

Amit Tiwary: this can be one other very good publication by way of Hakan Nesser. awesome plot! enjoyed this one too. Lead personality VV is particularly likable and his workforce is usually good. remarkable characterization.

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