



Before I Go

Leena Lehtolainen , Owen F. Witesman (Translator)

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A fierce detective risks everything to unravel a tangle of secrets and corruption protecting a killer in this spellbinding seventh mystery in the tension-filled Maria Kallio series.

When Petri Ilveskivi is murdered in the street on his way to a city-planning meeting, Maria Kallio, commander of Espoo's Violent Crime Unit, and her team are first on the scene. Almost immediately, her focus is on the band of skinheads who brutally attacked the Finnish commissioner and his husband three years earlier. Did they finally finish the hate crime they started? But the trail soon reveals a web of lies—secrets Petri was keeping from even those closest to him—and a long list of suspects.

As she juggles her obligations as a wife, mother, and detective, Maria suggests to her superiors that what first appears to be a random assault may actually be something more sinister. When she's met with silence and higher-ups take her off the case, she disobeys orders and investigates on her own, putting both her family and herself at risk. In this captivating tale in the Maria Kallio series, someone is protecting a killer. Can Maria track them down before the next victim falls?

Before I Go Details

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From Reader Review Before I Go for online ebook

Megan says

I was fortunate enough to win an ebook copy of the seventh book in the Maria Kallio series. I've read the first four, so there was a bit of a gap between the last one I read and this one. However, I felt like it was easy enough to pick back up with Kallio and crew. While there are recurring characters and events in Kallio's personal life have changed over the course of the series, I've found that these books work well as stand-alone novels, too.

In this one, Kallio is investigating the death of Petri Ilveski, who was killed on his way to a city-planning meeting. Kallio immediately focuses her attention a group of skinheads who attacked Ilveski and his husband three years prior. When Kallio suggests something more sinister may be at play, her superiors shut her down. However, she persists, as she often does, but her pursuit of the truth puts herself and her family at risk. Kallio seemed more restless in this offering, a bit like she was trying to find her bearings while juggling her professional and personal life obligations. While she's always been restless, she seemed a little more out of sorts than when she was single. As with other offerings in this series, I appreciated the societal issues that were woven into the story and enjoyed being reacquainted with Kallio and the recurring characters.

As a bonus, I used this for the 2017 Ultimate PopSugar Reading Challenge prompt to read "a book with a cat on the cover" (woo-hoo!). Many thanks to FirstReads for giving me the chance to read another book in the always enjoyable Maria Kallio series -- I look forward to finding copies of the fifth and sixth to find out what happened between the fourth and this one!

Jean Kolinofsky says

I won a copy of this book from Goodreads. While it is the seventh book in the series, it also works well as a stand-alone.

When Petri Ilveskivi is killed on his way to a City Planning Commission meeting, it falls to Maria Kallio and her Violent Crimes Unit to investigate. Petri and his lover Tommi had been attacked in the past. As Maria looks into the murder, she finds connections not only to the past attack but also to the Planning Commission.

Leena Lehtolainen has developed a cast of characters that work well together. There is a balance between the investigation and the personal lives of members of the unit that brings them to life. Their investigation involves topical social issues while also providing some interesting twists to keep the reader involved.

Roxann says

From the cover: When Petri Ilveskivi is murdered in the street on his way to a city-planning meeting, Maria Kallio, commander of Espoo's Violent Crime Unit, and her team are first on the scene. Almost immediately, her focus is on the band of skinheads who brutally attacked the Finnish commissioner and his husband three years earlier. Did they finally finish the hate crime they started? But the trail soon reveals a web of lies—secrets Petri was keeping from even those closest to him—and a long list of suspects. As she juggles

her obligations as a wife, mother, and detective, Maria suggests to her superiors that what first appears to be a random assault may actually be something more sinister. When she's met with silence and higher-ups take her off the case, she disobeys orders and investigates on her own, putting both her family and herself at risk. In this captivating tale in the Maria Kallio series, someone is protecting a killer. Can Maria track them down before the next victim falls?

I received the book for free through Goodreads Giveaways.

This is the 7th book in the series, but I have not read any of the others in the series. The names for me were unusual, but when I couldn't pronounce them I try to come up with something that phonically worked and kept it the same throughout the book. I also notice a large cast of characters-this was a little difficult to follow. Some of the story was hard to follow, but that could be because of the translation. The story almost could have ended in the middle since that's when the killer was revealed. The rest of the book was finding and questioning everyone. I'm not used to that style of writing/plot. Overall it is an ok book to read.

Pam Jankowski says

This is a book I had a hard time keeping my interest. I feel some of the problem is that it is book #7 in a series and I have never read this series. Some series are best started with the first book to grow with the characters maybe that is the problem. I was not drawing this book well and it didn't Jeremy engaged. I will give a benefit of doubt to author and try the 1st in the series and see if it is any better.

Ann says

Latest in this series . . . perhaps a little less satisfying than previous entries but still an enjoyable story with likeable characters. The main plot involves the death of a City Planning commission member and includes following the clues but also interference from City leaders as it becomes likely that the murder was to prevent exposure of a wide ranging scandal.

For me, the biggest difficulty with the book is the unfamiliarity of the Finnish names. Many seemed to be spelled similarly to each other so you have to pay pretty close attention. Also, there does tend to be a pretty big cast of characters and sometimes they're referred to by first names and sometimes last names.

I also felt like the links between clues weren't always explained thoroughly, but there's no way of knowing if that's the fault of the author or of the translator. Overall, though, I enjoyed it, and look forward to #8.

Mike Cuthbert says

I have come across Lehtolainen's work before and enjoyed it. This entry has all of the features of her earlier works with a faster pace. Maria Kallio is a lieutenant in the Espoo police department. (Espoo is the second-largest city in Finland and a suburb of Helsinki.) Her staff is mixed and one of the features of Kallio's world is how they all interact outside the office as well as inside it. My favorites may be Koivu and Wang. They are partners and in this novel they are discussing whether or not to become partners in life as well as on the job. Their decision to move in together is fraught with tension and it becomes funny as they struggle. Kallio is a

complex figure. She has a continuing fascination with a murderer, living in prison. She fantasizes about him and, in a memorable scene in the novel, she goes into prison to interview Mikke about her ongoing murder cases and he, in fact, gives her information that helps solve the case. The case involves the murder of a prominent political figure in Espoo, Petri Ilveskivi, who is knifed to death after being clubbed while bike riding to work. It turns out that Petri has another life as a gay man, which his wife does not know about so the question initially becomes is this a gay murder or not? Fortunately, it is not that simple and the suspects multiply, as does the complexity of the case. Ilveskivi is also the chairman of the City Planning Commission and soon the investigation into his death and, later, the death of the man suspected of killing him, broadens into a case of civic corruption—a facet of Nordic Noir that is typical. Also typical is the incompetence and political insensitivity of the leaders of the Espoo police. It's almost as though being a higher up in the force puts you under suspicion automatically. Anti Sarkela, Maria's husband, is largely a peripheral figure, good for an occasional roll in the hay, but inconspicuous. Her daughter, Iida, is central to a lot of Maria's off hours and is a constant presence in her mind, especially when threatened. (Child endangerment also a classic part of Nordic Noir.) Kallo plays soccer, works out with weights, acts like a feminist and behaves like one but she is not above flirting when it suits her. She remains delightfully offbeat throughout the novel. If you read like I do and try to pronounce characters' names, this one will drive you batty. Try negotiating the following: Puupponen, Putusjärvi, and Saastamoinen! There is plenty of atmosphere, cold,aa and even a summer day or two to warm the surroundings. You'll probably want to meet Kallio for coffee. She's that kind of cop.

Pat says

This story felt so relevant because of collusion lead by a wealthy powerful business owner and developer who also has a position on the city planning committee. Sound vaguely familiar??

I enjoy this Finnish mystery series with Detective Maria Kallio as the main character. This book published in Finland in 2000 was recently translated and released here. There are several more in the series and I hope I don't have to wait to long for them.

Zazoo Laro says

Style scandinave que j'adore, cette fois-ci en Finlande, ce qui me plait aussi. On apprend beaucoup de la vie personnelle du personnage principal. Par contre la fin est totalement illogique. Quelqu'un qui engage des tueurs ne va pas tout d'un coup se rendre lui-même chez quelqu'un et se mettre dans une situation compromettante! Ca m'a un peu énervé et a enlevé tout le suspense. Et je vois maintenant que c'est déjà le 7e livre... pour moi c'était une erreur de débutant. Mais bon, reste que le roman est tout de même bien quand on aime découvrir la Finlande à travers un roman policier

Elaine says

I won a copy of *Before I Go* from a Goodreads Giveaway.

I didn't read the first six books so there was some background I lacked in terms of the main character and her life so far. Otherwise, it could do as a standalone.

In ***Before I Go***, Maria Kallio, a working mother and lover of punk rock, is called to investigate the brutal assault and death of a local politician and gay activist. As she probes into the death, she finds herself dealing with skinheads, drug addicts, a close call to a bomb, office politics and chauvinistic colleagues.

The mystery wasn't so much a mystery since the perp is called out midway through the book and the plot deals with Kallio and her colleagues having to interview and chase down suspects, pull in relatives for questioning and contend with politics in and outside of the office. Personal issues arise within her circle of colleagues, as well as her own troubles, that Kallio is forced to deal with, and like any working mother juggling multiple responsibilities, she deals with everything with a level head and mostly sound judgment.

Before I Go lacked suspense which made it hard to keep reading. I didn't dislike Kallio, I was just not very interested in her or her life. I also found the many references to flirting with colleagues to keep their conversation engaging completely unnecessary and out of place for the character and where she works, unless its a Finnish thing.

sslyb says

Maria finally has a mature voice!

Gary Van Cott says

3.5 stars. This book was ok but nothing special.

Elisa says

I hate to sound like an old-fashioned anti-feminist but... "sorry, I won't be investigating a murder today because it's mother's day and I need to cuddle with my daughter"? In real life I'd applaud that woman. Heck, I'd be that woman because I agree that family should be priority number one, but when it comes to literary characters, I want them to be tortured and indestructible. I cheer when things go well, but I want to read about the crime, and how it's investigated by a realistic team. Reading about how Maria plays football and cooks for her family, or how she discusses the case with a witness WHILE EATING ICE-CREAM! simply did not do it for me. Not to speak of her leaving her cat, wonderful Einstein, in the hospital while she goes on a weekend trip! What kind of person does that? Sorry, I used to love this series when it was about catching bad guys.

Lynne Moody says

This was my first book in this series. I really enjoyed it. The storyline was well put together that keep me interested till the very end. The characters were quirky and fun . I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway.

Ramona says

First of all I would like to acknowledge Goodreads, Ms Lehtolainen, AmazonCrossings and Kindle for the honor of reading this novel. The length was just right for a rainy day and it was a quick and fun read. The only difficulty I had was keeping the names straight till I figured out the characters, The novel moved at a fast pace and the characters were well developed. The novel stood alone and I did not feel that I needed to read the previous 6 novels to understand the characters. This would be a great beach read.

Linda says

Available through the Kindle Owner's Lending Library, this police procedural in the Nordic Noir genre is set in Finland. Even though it is listed as book seven in a series, I felt it worked well as a stand-alone.
