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¿Quién teme al lobo?

Karin Fossum

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El calor agobiante del verano se ha instalado en la pequeña localidad noruega de Finnemarka. En la soledad de su cabaña la anciana granjera Halldis Horn es hallada muerta de un hachazo. El sospechoso principal es Errki, un muchacho esquizofrénico al que las habladurías acusan también de haber matado a su madre.

El carismático inspector Sejer es encargado del caso. Durante sus investigaciones entra en contacto con la psicóloga de Errki, que cree firmemente en su inocencia. Con su discreta insistencia Sejer rastrea todas las pistas, mientras se busca al desaparecido Errki. El único que lo ha visto es Kannick, un adolescente huérfano con un talento especial para el tiro con arco, que afirma haber visto a Errki en el lugar de los hechos. Karin Fossum teje así la historia de un crimen multifacético en el que los destinos de tres personajes indefensos se entrecruzan trágicamente.

«Mezclad las historias de Sherlock Holmes, meted personajes de Bergman y la sangre de Tarantino, y tendréis a Karin Fossum.»

Entertainment Weekly

¿Quién teme al lobo? Details

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From Reader Review ¿Quién teme al lobo? for online ebook

A. says

Un thriller un tanto disfuncional con tres "sospechosos" disfuncionales. La reunión final de los tres tendría algo de hilarante si no fuera porque situaciones como el abandono infantil o las patologías psiquiátricas están de por medio. La profundización sobre éstas últimas (en particular la esquizofrenia) merece una mención aparte porque va más allá de lo que estamos acostumbrados a leer en este tipo de literatura.

Naomi says

I plan on giving all of my Karin Fossum reviews the same statement because I don't even want the hint of a spoiler on this woman's fantastic work. Fossum's writing gave me my love of Scandinavian mystery writers and I seek those writings out. Hands down, though, Fossum's work is the best I have come across so far.

Linda Branham Greenwell says

At first I had a hard time getting "into" the book - then I couldn't put it down :)
It opens with Errki - who is a mental patient. Then the story jumps to Dr. Sejer almost witnessing a bank robbery - and becoming part of the robbery investigation. The story again jumps to a boys home where one of the boys witnessed Errki at the scene where an older lady was killed
Then it all starts coming together....The intersecting worlds of Errki, the robber (known as Morgan), Kannick Snellingen, and Inspector Sejer and his assistant, Jacob Scarre, create an absolutely amazing combination of psychological portraits and interactions. Morgan and Errki, hiding out together in an abandoned cabin, try to avoid the police and stay alive, remaining wary of each other but starting to communicate about the voices Errki hears in his head. A wonderful psychological rendition of everyone :)

Kay says

I'd pretty much sworn off of detective novels, but two things made me pick up a few of Karen Fossum's crime novels: the Norwegian settings and the promise of a good psychological thriller in the tradition of Ruth Rendell or Minette Walters. In a nutshell, the books were what I'd expected. *He Who Fears the Wolf* was the one I liked the best of the three I read (the other were *Don't Look Back* and *When the Devil Holds the Candle*).

One thing that is quite notable about Fossum is that she gets inside the heads of even fairly repugnant characters to make the reader understand them. On the downside, the police detective is rather predictable -- your usual eccentric loner. Anyone who has read Inspector Morse or P.D. James will find this type familiar. (Having said that, though, I must also say that I far prefer this type to the "spunky female detectives" that seem to have sprung up everywhere like mushrooms in crime fiction. Saints preserve us.)

Anna says

Fossum has an interesting style. Not quite thriller for me, but suspense with loose procedurals and with very interesting characters and histories for the bad guys. I haven't found another author whose style would be quite like this.

Part of Inspector Sejer series; can be read separately and out of order. 3.5 stars. Very good characters and histories, but a bit too easy an ending, and could have had a bit more action.

An old woman living alone in the woods is found murdered, and it falls to Sejer to investigate the case. The only witness was a 12 y old fat, obsessed kid living in a home for delinquents, and the prime suspect is a recent escapee from a mental institution. Add a bank robbery by a loose cannon, and a set of coincidences that bind the bad guys together...

The histories and the characters of the bad guys are fascinating. The only thing I could complain is the name of the schizophrenic guy; he's supposed to be a Finn. In which case both his first and last names are impossible. Errki Johrma - that's how the name sounds and how it's spelled here, but believe me, the Finns are not creative with allowing cr8tif spellings of their names. Errki would not be allowable for a Finn as a name; it would have to be Erkki. The same goes for Johrma; it would have to be Jorma (and that would be like Jorge, usually used just as a first name).

Paul says

I usually have a stack of Scandinavian noir books waiting to be read. When push comes to shove and I can't think what to read I'll grab one from the pile. Some from authors I've read many times before and some are first time outings. This is my first Fossum book I was intrigued by the blurb on the back. It didn't strike me as the usual murder mystery.

The author has given us an interesting set of characters to observe in this tale. It strikes me that the Inspector for which this series is based about takes some what of a back seat in this book. Errki the man who is suspected of committing the murder from the beginning of the book plays much more of a leading role. This is something I found to be an interesting choice. While at first I wasn't sure how to take Errki. As the book progressed I found myself becoming more immersed in his story and feeling more sympathy for him. Morgan his abductor and bank robber seems to facilitate in this plot allowing Errki to open up about his life. Throw in to the mix Kannick a boy from a home for troubled boys and his bow and arrows. She does an amazing job of bringing these characters alive before your eyes and giving them gravity and meaning the interaction like a small chain reaction all leading us further in to the woods.

Fossum has done an insightful job of using a crime story to also deal with the subject of mental health. At no point did I feel she was using it as a crutch to explain away the action that takes place. Her use of the inspector in this seems much more like a light touch. And for me it worked for the story she was trying to tell. At the end on the day there is still a mystery to be solved which she manages to do in an effective manner. The switching between the two groups allows for the story to flow to its own rhythm. At no point did I feel like the story was slowing down while she kept my interest right up until the end.

For a book I chose at random from my stack I was pleasantly surprised by this. It might not have been what I

though going in to it. But it supplied a shift in gear that I found enjoyable. It managed to escape the trap of book series of not becoming a formulaic tale. Instead giving us a musing on what it's like to be the outsiders in there world. So If this is anything to go by I look forward to my next foray in to the authors series.

Brenda says

This book is the third in the series. I was a little disappointed with this book. Many chapters dealt with three characters: Morgan, a bank robber; Errki, a mentally ill young man; and Kannick, a 12 year old delinquent. I really didn't care for them and sighed whenever the next chapter involved them. The investigation of the crimes is barely evident. But I muddled through. I still like Inspector Sejer, and got to know a little bit more about Skarre. These two should be more prominent in the books. The ending was a MAJOR cliffhanger, and I don't have the next book on hand.

Melissa says

This is the third Inspector Sejer book and I am beginning to see why writers whose books I have enjoyed (Ruth Rendell, Jo Nesbo) have sung her praises.

This story takes us to two crimes that are related, linked by a lunatic escaped from the asylum. What makes it interesting is the way the author has written this - it's more about the characters, what led them to where they are in life, and how things unfold unexpectedly when their lives intersect.

What really pleased me in this story, however, is what is happening to Sejer in this novel. We know by now that he has been a widower for almost a decade, still missing his wife and not able to move on. In this novel, he meets Sara, a doctor at the asylum, and he begins to fall in love. He is terrified! Fossum's description of this process of falling is, to me, quite exquisite. Here's an excerpt that stayed with me:

"Another wave surged inside him. When it retreated he looked inside his own heart, which had long been a deserted shore. For the first time in years, there was a woman standing there."

I just love her writing. I find myself thinking about the characters long after I've closed the book. The relationship developing between Sejer and his junior Skarre is quite humorous in this novel.

Rachel Hall says

He Who Fears The Wolf is the third outing in Karin Fossum's intelligent and frequently profound series featuring Chief Inspector Konrad Sejer and his choirboy good looking subordinate, Jacob Skarre. The second novel to appear in English (translated by Felicity David), this tale takes three individuals who would typically fall into the category of dysfunctional misfits and occupy the outer fringes of society and contrives their meeting. Often shunned and eschewed due to their status as local harbingers of trouble, the potential for mayhem is exponentially raised as their number is increased. When twenty-four-year old Errki Johrma leaves the Beacon psychiatric hospital at 3 a.m. intending never to return, he heads into the surrounding woods. Errki knows he isn't quite made up like those in mainstream society. Marked out by his lank, greasy hair,

daily uniform of black clothes and his refusal to look up from the ground, his appearance is enough for anyone to steer clear. His hostile demeanour and deep-set eyes complete the image of a dangerous schizophrenic and with his swinging gait he jolts and twists as he searches for sanctuary in the woods. His first stop is an abandoned cabin, only to then come across elderly no-nonsense widower Halldis Horn weeding the garden of the little farm she still inhabits. The next moment of action see twelve-year-old reform school resident, Kannick Snelligen rushing into the police station to report the bloodied corpse of Halldis on her front step, quickly followed by his claim of sighting Errki Johrma nearby the surrounding area. Local legend has seen Errki's reputation as a deranged madman gain momentum but there are others, Konrad Sejer included, who think that the greatest danger the man presents is to himself. Afraid of people and notoriously reluctant to encounter others for fear of being mocked or ridiculed, Sejer just cannot rationalise the shock claim of murder with what he knows. However, with medication no longer at his ready disposal, Sejer finds himself seeking out the doctor who has treated Errki for four-months in the asylum for further advice.

It is musing on this situation that Sejer encounters his next problem, as it proves that an ominous feeling about a shifty character who marches into Fokus Bank comes to fruition. Firing a shot and escaping with the loot and an unwitting hostage who happens to be the prime suspect for the murder of Halldis Horn (Errki Johrma), robber Morgan subsequently makes an escape into the woods. It is this combination of two dangerous and unstable individuals with nothing to lose that so worries Sejer. It takes time to understand the territory into which Fossum is taking this third novel featuring the erudite and compassionate fifty-year-old Konrad Sejer, but once it gathers momentum this is an unstoppable collision course between two misfits. *He Who Fears The Wolf* is once again another instalment of crime fiction in which the procedural element plays second fiddle to the fascinating psychological underpinnings that Karin Fossum is so well known for. The touching bond forged between at first Errki and bank robber Morgan, which is then widened to include obese delinquent Kannick is a touching testament to opening hearts and minds.

Fossum chooses this novel to allow her readers to learn more about both of her lead detectives, with a chance to see Sejer contemplating romance after the sad demise of his adored wife, Elise, when he encounters the enigmatic and fiercely intelligent psychiatrist, Dr Struel. Mounting a solid defence of a patient who she has worked with for only four-months, fiery Dr Sara Struel explains to Sejer that Errki is afraid of confrontation, being judged by his peers and thus furthered ostracised by society. It is only when backed into a corner that he presents a potential risk to others. After nine years as a widower and with the reliable canine, Kollberg, his only companion Chief Inspector Sejer is a handsome man and a driven investigator with an unwavering faith in human beings. Another facet of this novel is the chance to observe enthusiastic and devout Jacob Skarre alongside Sejer. Skarre occupies the middle ground between the element of the police force which are quick to see local Errki Johrma as bad news. As Skarre takes the time to assert his belief that an act cannot be defended just the person who committed it he shows he is learning well from Sejer. That Morgan takes the time to clarify the misnomer that Errki was responsible for his mother's death and Kannick's arrow unintentionally caused injury, it shows just how much empathy is dependent and benefits from social experience.

Kathy says

The writing and creative force behind this book deserves more stars, but for me I don't want to go there anymore. This lady knows sick minds, and I must admit to not liking to spend my sleepless night reading improbable pairings of ugh, how to start? Let's try the beginning. Sejer is walking to work when he sees a dude with a strange scarf wrapped around his neck and a certain look and his alarm bells go off. He turns

around and follows this young man into a bank and then decides everything looked normal so he heads back in the original direction toward work. But then I am making this sound straightforward, and nothing is. "Deep inside his private universe there was a weak spot. He had never recovered from his grief at the loss of Elise; it had grown bigger and then imploded to form a black hole that sucked him in every once in a while. He refocused on the swarm of people..." This intuition of his turned out to be spot on with regard to the young man who robbed the bank and took a hostage. The hostage turned out to be a schizophrenic young man who had escaped from the local asylum. OK, now I have to admit to being really entertained by the interplay of robber and hostage. However...there was enough sad/bad/twisted in this tale including a 12 year old boy who kills and gets away with lying about it that I am going to have to put Fossum on the back burner for now. Bumping up stars to 4, well deserved. But will I be able to get any sleep now?

Rubi says

La historia me ha llevado a reflexionar de lo poco que sé sobre las enfermedades mentales, que quienes la padecen viven en un mundo paralelo lleno de una simplicidad y compresión que escapa a la nuestra.
History has led me to reflect on how little I know about mental illness, that those who suffer from it live in a parallel world full of simplicity and understanding that escapes our own.

Jean says

A friend and I have been reading lots of Scandinavian mysteries since we finished the Stieg Larson books. We read all of Henning Mankell, who is probably the best mystery writer around today, along with Ruth Rendell, but both of them are getting away from what I would consider "pure" mystery. He Who Fears the Wolf is the first Karin Fossum I've read and I enjoyed it. The premise is interesting: A bank robber kidnaps a schizophrenic boy who is being hunted as a suspect in the brutal murder of an old woman. Inspector Sejer has to find the pair and figure out who killed the woman.

There are lots of interesting characters in this story, but most interesting is Inspector Sejer. He's very introspective but not in the morose way of Kurt Wallander (Henning Mankell's detective). The mystery is solved in the end in a satisfactory manner. Now I'm reading the next in the Sejer series, to see what happens to him next.

Dave Riley says

I'm a Fossum junkie. She can do no wrong and this small story suggests that I may indeed be right in my estimates.

Herein is the usual Fossum ethical challenge as presumptions are peeled back. Tragic of course -- there has to be tragedy in Fossum's crime stories; anguish and angst.

But this one is served up almost as a homage to Harold Pinter. Outside the door is society which is both our mother and our tormentor.'Tis very dramatic in the story telling sense. Containment in one room. Characters forced to come to terms with one another. How we explore each other by talking our way through it.

Karin Fossum, in her way, is Henrik Ibsen's godchild. Both are Norwegian...and both deal with perception mediated by social mores and that complication maybe the actuality of the individual's actions aren't as they may seem.

If there are secrets and lies, then we are the primary agents of the mistelling.

The irony is that the investigation into a brutal murder and bank robbery is almost aside show. Its' not so much about tracking down the crims but that the purported crims may also have something to tell us about who we are...because of the way *we see them*.

Mark says

“A person can’t see much when the Devil is holding the candle.”

Here’s the situation: We have a murdered woman, found at her home in the deep woods. Back in town, we have an early morning bank robbery, with a hostage taken. We have an escaped mental patient, last seen roaming the same woods and for good measure, throw in a fat juvenile delinquent, armed with a bow and arrow. How do all these things come together? Well, you’ll have to read this highly enjoyable mystery, set in Norway, to find out.

This is the 2nd book in a series, featuring Inspector Sejer. He is a likable character, despite his taciturn manner and the reader will find much pleasure in tagging along with him, as he attempts to piece together this thorny puzzle. Yes, the subject matter is very dark, but Fossum brings a fresh, sometimes playful, air to the proceedings. I can’t wait to continue this terrific series.

Vesela says

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