

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin white lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is modern and digital.

The Whisperer

Written by Karin Fossum

Published by sangstrading

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The Whisperer

By Karin Fossum

The Whisperers

In this tense and twisty latest from Norway's maven of crime, time shifts between Inspector Sejer's interrogation of the accused Ragna Reigel and the shocking events that led up to her arrest. How did this lonely, quiet woman come to kill a man—or did she?

The Whisperer In Darkness

How did a lonely, quiet woman come to kill a man—or did she?

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The Whisperers Walking Dead

Ragna Riegel is a soft-spoken woman of routines. She must have order in her life, and she does, until one day she finds a letter in her mailbox with her name on the envelope and a clear threat written in block capitals on the sheet inside. With the arrival of the letter, and eventually others like it, Ragna's carefully constructed life begins to unravel into a nightmare—threatened by an unknown enemy, paranoid and unable to sleep, her isolation becomes all the more extreme. Ragna's distress does culminate in a death, but she is the perpetrator rather than the victim.

The Whisperers 1967

The Whisperer shifts between Inspector Sejer's interrogation of Ragna and the shocking events that led up to her arrest. Sejer thinks it is an open-and-shut case, but is it? Compelling and unnerving, The Whisperer probes plausible madness in everyday life and asks us to question assumptions even in its final moments.

*My thanks to www.shotsmag.co.uk for sending me a paperback copy in exchange for an honest unbiased review *

Ragna Reigel lives alone in her childhood home in the small Norwegian town of Kirkelina. Her only son Rikard left home some ten years earlier, and now works in Berlin, but apart from the occasional Christmas card, they have no contact whatsoever. Although Ragna works in a local supermarket, she lives a lonely and claustrophobic life - her inability to speak following a medical procedure, in which her vocal chords were damaged, means that she deploys techniques such as facial expressions, small movements of body language and whispering to help make herself understood, but she avoids interaction with others whenever possible, she's very much the archetypal loner.

It's made clear from the start that Ragna has committed a serious crime after receiving anonymous threats, but the details are only slowly revealed during interviews with Police Inspector Sejer. The Inspector doesn't appear to have developed the hard exterior common of most seasoned cops. It's obvious to the reader that Ragna has mental health issues - her life being dictated by routine, compulsion, and illusions, and any deviation from that routine leaves her distressed and angry. Sejer acknowledges that she has issues and handles the interview process with care and compassion, slowly encouraging her to divulge details of the crime for which she has been arrested.

This was very much a character driven novel and quite a slow burner, so if you're expecting a fast paced, plot driven crime novel then this might not be for you. Protagonist Ragna is a deep and complex character, displaying many of the disorders associated with mental illness, but despite the storyline having a dark and troubling theme, The Whisperer is a beautifully written book that flows effortlessly between past and present, slowly revealing the events leading up to Ragna's incarceration - however, it's the revelation on the very last page that leaves the reader with much to ponder!

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The Whisperer

from a writer at the top of her game, and hopefully she will produce many more novels with which to tempt us. Would definitely recommend. ...more

The Whisperer In Darkness Movie

Karin Fossum writes an intricate and dense character driven psychological whydunnit set in the small town of Kirkelina in Norway. Ragna Reigel is the eponymous Whisperer, a woman who lives a small routine driven life, avoiding contact with most people. A botched surgical operation on her throat has left her vocal chords damaged and unable to speak normally, only able to whisper, left with a heavily scarred throat that she covers up. Similar to someone suffering from Asperger's Syndrome, Ragna's life is driven by routines, and anything that deviates from them leave her feeling unsettled and disturbed. She works at a supermarket, Europris, close to two workers there, Gunnhild and Lars, and regularly visits the shop close to her, run by the Turkish Irfan Baris. As the story begins, we are aware that a terrible crime has been committed although it is only near the end of the book do we learn what it is that Ragna has done. She is on remand, and being interrogated with compassion by Inspector Konrad Sejer, accompanied by his dog, Fred, his job to discover the circumstances that lie behind the crime, tasked with writing a report which will influence the judicial process and the justice meted out.

Fossum provides a claustrophobic, detailed and heavily descriptive picture of Ragna's daily life and snippets of her past, that come to be slowly revealed in the narrative. Ragna's son, Rikard Josef, left home at 17 years of age, and has not returned home since. There is no contact between mother and son other than Christmas and Birthday cards. Ragna is proud of her son, now a Director running a Berlin hotel with great success, wishing she was closer to him. Out of the blue, she starts getting scary and disturbing letters that have her fearful, and paranoid, as she begins to suspect those around her, feeling desperately unsafe, experiencing disturbing dreams, sleeplessness and needing pills. Ragna believes herself to be ugly, of no value, invisible, wretched and abandoned, her disability propels her to shun the warmth and companionship of people.

This is not a fast paced read or action driven read, so if that is what you are looking for, then this book is not for you. It is the examination of a life, and the development of a meaningful relationship between Inspector Sejer and a woman who feels unloved, whose central need is to reconnect with her estranged son. Karin Fossum focuses on a forensic approach to crime and the character and life of the perpetrator, and the judicial process that springs into action. This is a thoughtful look at crime and what lies behind the person who commits it, looking at issues of justice, dysfunctional families, the power and nature of the spoken word, and mother and son relationships. What impressed me most was Sejer's lack of judgement and humanity when it came to getting close to Ragna as he starts to connect with her, seeing her for what she is, deeming her a worthy human being and ensuring she is helped. The crime is almost a secondary affair in Fossum's writing, she is far more interested in what underlies it. Many thanks to Random House Vintage for an ARC. ...more

The Whisperer

The Whisperer is a gloomy, claustrophobic crime thriller that is a deep and penetrating character study rather than an action packed bang bang shoot 'em up. Ragnar is the central character in the book and the chapters alternate between a quiet and patient police interrogation and Ragna's memory of events. Ragna is a quiet person, shy by nature, almost unnoticeable, hidden in plain sight, keeping mainly too herself. And she has strategies for dealing with things like counting her steps and always sitting on the same place on the bus. She bothers no one and generally no one bothers her. And, because of a botched operation, she cannot speak above a whisper. Welcome to her world. ...more

The Whisperer Book

Ragna Riegel works at Europris (a supermarket) and live alone in her childhood home. Her parents are dead and her only son has moved to Berlin. The only contact they have is the occasional Christmas and birthday cards. Ragna likes a routine. She sits on the same seat on the bus every day and buys the same items at the local shop. Then one day her routine is shattered. She receives a letter. It contains a threat by an unknown enemy. Ragna realises she must use all means possible to defend herself

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I have not read any of Karin Fossum's books before and I did not realise that this was book 13 in the series. It definitely can be read as a standalone. The story is set in the small town of Kirkelina in Norway. Ragna has had an operation on her throat that left her with damaged vocal chords. Anonymous letters that Ragna has received have upset her daily routine. Inspector Sejer is compassionate to Regna and her fears. The pace of this well written book is slow but that works well for this story. It has quite an emotional ending.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Random House UK, Vintage Publishing and the author Karin Fossum for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

...more

Well, first got to say I had no idea this was book 29, yep 29 in The Inspector Sejer series, it reads 100% as a stand alone, well imo.

Secondly the main character Ragna Riegel,as she was Norwegian reminded me of a friend,so unbeknown to them they played the main part in the "film" that accompanies your imagination when you read! ðŸ˜ƒ

Karin Fossum is billed as the "Queen of Norwegian Crime Writing" and I have to confess to not knowingly ever read a Norwegian author before (nor do I watch any of the

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Karin Fossum is billed as the "Queen of Norwegian Crime Writing" and I have to confess to not knowingly ever read a Norwegian author before (nor do I watch any of the brooding dramas on Ch4 from Norway/Scandi) strange really as Copenhagen is my fav city in the world followed by Oslo but anyway I digress....

Obvs the names, towns etc are in Norwegian as are the police procedural parts and the descriptions of

The Whisperer

prison etc, I found this fascinating as was the general description of Norwegian life and customs, also the shop where Ragna worked was wonderfully described and made me want to go there and browse the different goods on offer (in comparison to UK shops)

I also found the odd political statement on the refugee status in Norway interesting, from both viewpoints (one character is a Turkish shop owner who features on and off)

Ragna can only whisper after a botched op and this is delved into quite a lot in the book and you really feel for her and the problems and trials it brings every day

The story itself is dark(ish) but not inky dark, there is enough heart and soul in it to not just be classed as a dark thriller, the writing is deliberate and detailed (on occasion repeated, even laboured a few times) and gives you a rare insight into a troubled and very active mind, what could be mundane is described with such clarity it becomes intense

Ragna receives nasty threats in her letterbox and is being followed, but why and by who?

I can almost here you sigh and say not again!!, but thats where the similarity with other books ends....and I am not giving any spoilers other than to say its dramatic and changeable!! and the ending was very emotional for Ragna and I think for the reader!, then the last few sentences changed the game again!!!

Inspector Serjer is a joy and the interactions between him and various characters inc Rega brilliantly described

A really unusual book, that I may have overlooked and thought nah not for me but really glad I gave it a chance as was a stimulating read

...more

The Whisperer War

The Whisperer by "Norwegian Queen of Crime" Karin Fossum is a Scandinavian mystery where the crime is only divulged towards the end of the book. This is the thirteenth Inspector Sejer novel but this title reads well as a standalone. The book alternates between Ragna Riegel's daily life and the later interrogation of Ragna by Inspector Sejer about the crime she committed. Ragna, a middle-aged single mother, has a precise life. She lives alone, after her teenage son moved to Berlin. She lives in the home she grew up in, previously with her parents. She works in a store, commutes by bus where she always sits in the same seat and shops for her supper in the same shop every day. One day, she finds a threatening anonymous note in her mailbox, leading her to believe her life is in danger. Over time, more notes appear and Ragna's fear grows. Meanwhile, every other chapter has Inspector Sejer interviewing Ragna. The reader is kept in the dark as to why Ragna is being detained by the police and what crime she committed. This Scandinavian mystery is typically very dark but you will need to find out the hows and whys of this woman's life, no matter what.. Highly recommended. Thank you to Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and NetGalley for the e-ARC in exchange for an honest review. ...more

The Whisperer, the thirteenth in the Inspector Konrad Sejer series, is a polarising crime novel which you'll either love or hate. This is because it is much more of a character study of loner Ragna Riegel than a book propelled by action. She is suspected of committing a crime and most of this story surrounds Inspector Sejer's attempts to understand her reasoning, so if you're looking for fast-paced, plot-driven crime fiction then you have come to the wrong place. Part of the reason Fossum is known as the Queen of Norwegian Crime is due to her originality, intelligent and nuanced plots and in-depth look at a characters motivation for committing a crime.

As always, the writing is scalpel sharp and the interview structure actually works like a charm here. As this is not a conventional or hard-boiled crime novel I recommend this more to those who enjoy psychological thrillers or those who appreciate character analysis, and I can't help but feel as though it would be a lot more successful as a novella rather than the full-length book that it is. The author masterfully and slowly ratchets up the tension and lets the story unravel over the whole book, and the reader really gets to know Ragna as well as Mr Sejer - with his quiet, thoughtful demeanour. This in effect is a whydunnit as opposed to a whodunnit, and it's one of Fossum's best novels to date.

The Whisperer

Many thanks to Harvill Secker for an ARC. ...more

The Whisperer Karin Fossum

I enjoy Nordic Noir police procedurals, and that is what I expected when I started reading this novel. Ragna had a failed surgery that left her unable to speak above a whisper. She works at what seems like the Norwegian version of a dollar store, and is convinced that someone is stalking her. She has had a difficult life-- impregnated by an older man when she was a teen, she and her son lived with her parents until he left and moved to Berlin. Is she really being menaced, or is she insane? The novel evolves as she converses with the police inspector after her arrest (we don't understand why at first). Fossum has written an intense and probing character study which gradually unfolds. Psychological suspense is not a genre that is usually at the top of my list, but I was impressed by this novel--3.5 stars. If that is one of the genres you love, I think you will enjoy *The Whisperer*.

...more

This is a long way from being normal, even for a genre as diverse and unconventional as Scandi crime. *The Whisperer* does feature Fossum's long-standing investigator, Inspector Sejer, but that's about the only thing this story has in common with a typical police procedural. It's not so much about the anatomy of a crime but an exploration of criminal psychopathy.

This is one of those books where it's best that you encounter it fresh; where you have the chance to form your own opinions. The narrator is extremely unreliable but her perspective is pitifully convincing. It's a magnificent construction of urban isolation; of melancholic paranoia, of abandonment and insecurity.

Fossum weaves these themes into the skein of everyday life. The events of *The Whisperer* could be taken directly from our daily experience. Who sees the frightened woman who always sits in the same place on the bus every day? Who has time for the shop assistant who looks a bit bedraggled? Gradually the narrative moves past the miserable mundanity of a grim existence and we start to understand why the protagonist is in police custody, why Sejer is taking so long to question her so

The Whisperer

carefully. And we start to wonder about exactly what occurred in these banal little incidents, the ones which should be trivial but which take on an appalling importance as the story unfolds.

Slow burn? Definitely.

Page-turning thrill-a-minute? Definitely not.

My attention meandered a little in the opening chapters but gradually succumbed to the insidious lure of the inevitable "and to Fossum's immense skill in constructing such solidly realised characters who endure such desperate situations. Spend too long immersed in this story and you too might start to feel uncertain and a little unsettled" and totally unprepared for the surprises in store.

Original, unpredictable and completely convincing, this is crime fiction for true connoisseurs.

9/10

There's a more detailed review of this book and many other crime/thrillers over at <http://www.murdermayhemandmore.net> ...more

The Whisperers Alpha

Unfortunately, Karin Fossum- The Whisperer, proved a little disappointing, although the build up in the beginning recounting the lonely life, and subsequent arrest of the whispering woman of the title for a slowly revealed crime, promised much. I did enjoy the head-to-head interrogation by Fossum regular, Inspector Konrad Sejer of the seemingly mouse-like suspect, Ragna Riegel, but it was all a little too ponderous and drawn out- about 100 pages too drawn out. Shame.

3.5 stars.

I always am pleased to discover a new book by Karin Fossum. She has a unique writing style all her own. Her stories are complex and character driven. They involve very little action but delve deep into her character's hearts, minds and motivations. Sometimes they dwell on a victim's dread, feelings of remorse or sorrow, loss or rejection. They may also involve transgressions, criminal acts or studies in madness. The reader may not always like the characters or empathize with them but will come to understand them better. 3.5 stars.

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Ragna is a plain, pale, fragile 46-year-old woman. She lives alone and rejects friendship or intimacy. She lost her voice in a medical error which damaged her vocal cords, making her only able to speak in a whisper. This results in her isolating herself, except from a couple of people at the department store where she works and enjoys shopping in a store close to her house. It is run by a Turkish man where she always purchases the same kind of spicy foods. She has a life dominated by routine, such as obsessively counting her footsteps while venturing out to the mailbox and sitting in the same seat on the bus.

She had a son as the result of an encounter with a much older photographer when she was a teenager. The son left home at age 17 and moved to Germany. She only hears from him by way of a Xmas card and occasionally a birthday card. She has a belief that he is managing a fine hotel in Berlin. When she doesn't hear from him when her cards are returned, she imagines he has moved to head a 5-star luxury hotel in South Africa. In her isolation, her vivid imagination makes her fantasies real to her.

Ragna has received several brief messages tucked in her mailbox that seem threatening to her. She is afraid she is being watched and has an unknown stalker. Her attempts to get help from the police result in failure, and her apprehension and fear grows.

The book opens with her being interviewed by Inspector Sejer who treats her with kindness and

The Whisperer

sympathy. However, it is clear that she has been arrested for committing a terrible crime and Sejer is trying to understand her motivation. We are not told the nature of the crime was until much later in the book. He is very patient while she tries to explain in whispers her life and what led up to her arrest.

The book is structured in such a way that we learn more about her life leading up to her crime and then alternates with Ragna's jailhouse interviews conducted by Inspector Sejer. What happens during this time is startling.

Recommended for those who enjoy dense, complicated studies in crime. Karin Fossum displays deep psychological insight in all her books. If you prefer mysteries with lots of action-packed thrills this is probably not for you. ...more

The Whisperer In Darkness 2011

Nordic Noir doesn't get any better than this: a very well written and deeply disturbing psychological thriller by Norway's leading lady of crime fiction, Karin Fossum.

This is a complete departure from the usual Sejer procedural who-dun-it, so don't expect "the usual". I would class it as a total stand alone novel despite Sejer's injections. Sejer is a character but it's written from "other eyes" than her former Sejer fare. Most of those are written with Sejer as "eyes" narrator.

I could go long on this review. But instead I will go short. No other thoughts/ observations but the main female character's are expressed for any "outside narration" (Sejer eventually This is a complete departure from the usual Sejer procedural who-dun-it, so don't expect "the usual". I would class it as a total stand alone novel despite Sejer's injections. Sejer is a character but it's written from "other eyes" than her former Sejer fare. Most of those are written with Sejer as "eyes" narrator.

I could go long on this review. But instead I will go short. No other thoughts/ observations but the main female character's are expressed for any "outside narration" (Sejer eventually the secondary narrator) until my page 138.

This book could earn anything from a 1 star to the full five. It depends upon patience, your interest in the psychology of mental illness, or/and your capacity for inward effusive turmoil combined with humongous (and I mean ENORMOUS) amounts of descriptive detail. At least 3/4ths of this book is descriptive detail of physical or minutia inert objects/ surroundings.

There was a point about 1/2 way home when I considered a DNF. Only her (Karin Fossum's) writing ability and mental illness knowledge level kept me going. And I HATED all the italics for the letter writing that was used. My eyes hurt.

Regardless- if you want to experience lifelong pain from the inside out- this will be your cup of tea. She has managed to encapsulate it here.

Far beyond depressive or dark- this is an individual look (from the inside/out) for an individual identity much like the duo "perceptions" of "We Have Always Lived in a Castle" (Shirley Jackson). Any more would be spoilers. The joy in this book would fit into the space of the period at the end of this sentence. With room left over. ...more