



Cold Courage

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A young woman has been gruesomely killed, her body abandoned in a car boot in the middle of London as a warning to others.

The police have no leads and no clues as to the identity of the victim.

It seems that Lia is the only one who refuses to let the murderer go unpunished.

A chance encounter with the mysterious Mari gives Lia fresh hope. But just who is she? Can Lia trust her? Can Lia afford not to trust her?

Cold Courage Details

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From Reader Review Cold Courage for online ebook

Reetta Saine says

Erilainen dekkari, joka vähän vetää yli monellakin tasolla. Teksti kuitenkin pitää hyvin koukussa, kun ei ajattele ihan turhan kriittisesti.

Linnea says

Mainio psykologinen trilleri vahvoista suomalaisista naisista, väkivallasta, epäoikeudenmukaisuudesta ja Lontoosta. Teos toimii itsekseen, mutta heittää sen verran koukkuja että toinen osa täytynee lukea.

Graham Crawford says

This was a pretty dreadful book, but it has won awards and is apparently well liked by people in Finland. It might just be the case that the English translation is terrible. There are some interesting themes of social justice and violence to women that have merit, but the prose is unsophisticated to the point of blandness.

I think this book is a wanna be "Girl with the Dragon Tattoo", written by someone punching way above their weight. It suffers from the fatal tendency of TELLING the reader things rather than SHOWING us. The vigilante genius is supposed to have a Sherlock-Holmesian skill of being able to read people's minds, but we never see this used to solve the crime, instead she simply uses her money to hire a batch of professionals with barely walk on parts. Our mysterious genius plays such a small role that it's hard to see why she is even needed in this book.

The plot mechanics are awkward and unbelievable. All the clues are discovered by the main character being improbably told key information. This story could have worked if time was spent on a high octane caper or sting - but it wallows in self conscious exposition.

WR says

Probably a 3.5 star book. It took a Long time to get going, and Mari seemed a lil unbelievable. But once the story got going, it reminded me a lot of Stieg Larsson. Which can't be a bad thing for a debut writer!

Aneta says

Took me a while to decide if not to go for five stars. I wasn't quite sure if this was my best purchase in the begining - first hundred pages didn't feel that moving... and then I got really hooked and began to like every character in the Studio. Just like that, in couple pages.

Moving towards the finish, the book was Finnish and absolutely brilliant. So, very strong 4 stars, more like 4.5!

Hiltunen is certainly an author I won't let out of my reader's sight.

Paul says

Mon opinion sur ce livre est assez partagée: l'histoire est bonne mais elle ne m'a pas donné tout ce que j'en attendais.

Je commence par le côté technique, puisqu'il s'agit du moins intéressant en terme de critique. Cependant, plusieurs éléments sont la preuve du manque d'attention de l'auteur envers son oeuvre.

Une entreprise créée par Mari se nomme *Asking*. Or, elle se retrouve, en une occurrence, écrite *Aksing*. Il me semble qu'une simple relecture aurait suffi à éviter cette erreur. (*1)

Il manque également, sauf erreur de ma part, le mot "que" dans la portion de phrase "est-ce nous devrions". (*2)

Enfin, le verbe "on invertit" aurait, à mon avis, plutôt dû être remplacé par "on intervertit". (*3)

Je fais la transition, chers téléspectateurs, avec ce qui m'a le plus dérangé avec ce livre: la manière qu'à l'auteur de mettre sur papier les dialogues de son récit.

En effet, sur toute la longueur du livre, et ce n'est pas rien de la dire vu la taille de l'objet, il est impossible de savoir si on est en train de lire la réplique d'un des personnages ou du texte narratif. Et là, vous êtes étonné. Ce n'est pas possible, me direz-vous? On sait forcément s'il s'agit d'une parole à voix haute, du fait de la présence d'un tiret en début de paragraphe ou de guillemets? Eh bien ici, je vous assure que non. Ce problème (du moins, ça l'a été pour moi) venant du fait que, dans un texte écrit de la même manière qu'un passage naratif, les mots le terminant sont, par exemple ", répondit-elle". Et cela m'a totalement empêché de conserver un rythme soutenu de lecture, puisque beaucoup de portions de texte, que l'on a pris pour narratives, du genre "Il y avait habituellement beaucoup de femmes Lettonnes à fréquenter cet endroit, dit Mari." nous font nous rendre compte qu'il ne fallait pas juste prendre ce qu'on a lu pour de la description mais pour un dialogue de personnage, modifiant totalement la mise en scène que l'on s'est mis en tête.

Pour terminer, j'explique ce dont j'ai parlé dans la première phrase de cette critique.

La quatrième de couverture nous vend une ambiance sombre et difficile, à travers le meurtre et la prostitution. Certes, le livre en contient, mais pas de là à mériter de nous faire croire qu'il n'y aura que cela. La protagoniste ne se retrouve dans les bas fonds d'une boîte de nuit, poursuivie par un méchant qu'une seule fois. De plus, l'intrigue principale est secondée par une histoire de politique et de candidat à démettre, qui n'a rien à voir avec la précédente. Je sais qu'il y a souvent 2 intrigues dans un récit, mais là elles sont carrément de même taille. Si vous vouliez pouvoir vous concentrer sur l'histoire présentée sur la couverture, c'est raté.

En conclusion, et surtout si toutes mes remarques ci-dessus ne vous rebutent pas, n'hésitez pas à lire ce livre. Il contient de l'action, de l'implication de la part des personnages mais aussi de fortes relations entre eux. Bref, un bon moment à passer.

Pages:

(*1) 97

(*2) 141

(*3) 205

Sanna says

Hieno, mukaansatempaava ja tiivistunnelmainen kirja. Jotenkin niin epäsuomalainen (hyvällä tavalla), vaikka suomalaisia naisia kirjassa esiintyikin. Innolla odotan seuraavan osan lukemista!

Suvi says

Luin kirjan kolmessa päivässä, koska se oli oikeasti niin mielenkiintoinen ja jännittävä. Lontoossa asuneena suomalaisena naisena erityisesti.

Pauliina Lassila says

Olen taas itselleni tyypillisesti lukenut sarjaa väärässä järjestyksessä ja nyt tämä ensimmäinen osa selvensi aiemmin lukemiani kirjoja. Luin kirjan juuri Lontoosta palattuani ja siksikin tykkäsin; oli helppo sijoittaa tapahtumat paikoilleen. Tykkään näiden kirjojen viipyilevästä tyylistä.

Hallie says

This may not actually be that bad at all, but I'd listened for 2 hours or so and we were pretty much stalled out with an inebriated discourse between Lia and Mari about why Finnish girls are so fantastic, which either depends on lots of good vodka and plenty of sex or results in the consumption of both, I got too bored to be sure I followed closely. Just didn't care enough to keep listening until the mystery actually became part of the story proper.

Anni says

3,5 stars!

.Sharon says

Definitely different, this is a slow burn with a noir type feel throughout.

Lia a Finnish graphic designer who has a life changing experience when a murdered Latvian prostitute is found dead in broad daylight, the tragic circumstances do not leave Lia she becomes somewhat obsessed with any progress on the case.

Lia meets Mari, an enigmatic woman with an almost supernatural power, who has an innate ability to read people, running a secretive organisation called 'The Studio' . Here they try to put right injustices which come in many wide and varied forms. they manipulate the system and are often on the wrong side of the law to gain the results they want.

A firm friendship ensues between Lia and Mari though Mari's motives are unclear, she's a multi-layered complex character as she handles challenges like, domestic abuse, corruption, prostitution, murder all sewn into the plot seamlessly.

They make an agreement if Lia helps to bring down a corrupt politician who is gaining momentum, Mari will use her own vast resources to help find out more information about the murder of the Latvian prostitute.

I found Mari's character almost frigid and could not warm to her, though the secrets she holds makes me want to investigate further.

Lia is much easier to understand and I loved how she developed and grew in strength as the story progressed. The surrounding characters are strong and well defined, with a quality of writing that can't be denied. I found the slow pace increased my satisfaction towards the end and would decidedly read more by PH.

James Perkins says

Lia Pajala is a Finnish expat living in London who becomes involved with the Studio, a small organisation that operates slightly below the law to manipulate social justice as its owner Mari Rautee, another Finnish expat, sees fit. When Lia witnesses the results of a brutal murder in central London and the police investigation stalls due to a lack of evidence, she works with the Studio to investigate the crime and bring the perpetrators to account. Mari is also working on a campaign to remove the political ambitions of Arthur Fried, the leader of the ultra-right Fair Rule party, likely to gain a foothold in Parliament at the next election. Hiltunen's characters and plot were interesting enough to keep me reading to the end. The idea of placing Finns in Britain added an extra layer that showed evidence of a sly inventiveness in the author's imagination and the freedom to make a loose social commentary without borders. An occasional clash of cultures (Finnish vs British) also caused some amusement, although this was not really played up much in the story. Lia's experience of the sometimes isolated expat life was realistic and her PTSD well-described - it was nice to see some less common themes novelised in more detail than is usual in popular fiction.

Unfortunately, there was plenty not to like about this book. First and foremost, the author has enjoyed a career of over 20 years as a journalist. A journalist has the potential to be an excellent novelist, but the problem here was that he seemed to forget that his format was supposed to be different. The result was short, pointed sentences and paragraphs that read more like an online newspaper report than a novel. Second, it was translated from Finnish. Translated works can be very, very good, but they have to be properly fluent; this one read so that it was painfully obvious that it was a translation. Narrative flow was sacrificed for an almost complete grammatical accuracy, and the characters spoke and thought in a bland language almost entirely without idiom, unless it was highlighted to show "Yes this person is ", as when the Finns used Finnish words that have no English equivalent. In reality, it's very difficult to remove slang, lifelong linguistic habits and idiomatic expressions from thought processes and regular speech, and a distinct lack of them sounds unnatural - every competent writer knows that speech idiosyncrasies are part of characterisation in fiction. Third, the male Latvian characters were bad-guy pimps, whose female Latvian victims were prostitutes,

cardboard characters who were either entirely good or entirely bad, reinforcing eastern European stereotypes without depth or dimension. Fourth, the book was set in London, but I got no sense of place from it - a few place names and bus routes are not enough. Where were the smells, the tastes, the sounds, the bustle, the crowdedness? Part of the story happened around Christmas, but there was barely any mention of Yuletide London - the city virtually transforms itself at that time of year, as any local or tourist will tell you, but the author failed to evoke any seasonal feeling whatsoever. Fifth, the Studio was just a bit too full of overtalented stereotypes (the computer nerd, the grizzled detective, etc.) that never disagreed with each other, so it could do no wrong and never fail, which robbed the story of any suspense. This is supposed to be a crime novel. Suspense is what makes the story work.

Really, if this book won awards, it must have lost something essential in translation. Some press reviews have compared him to Stieg Larsson, but he doesn't come anywhere close. I want to give this novel a higher grade, but there's far too much wrong with it - every other Nordic crime writer I've read (all in English translation) has done far better work, even the ones to whom I've only given three stars. I'm not going to read the sequel, nor any more by this writer. It just didn't impress me enough, and life's too short to read authors that I don't like.

Tracy says

A story that went nowhere with unrealistic situations and characters. The side characters were more interesting than the two mains, who were a pair of stilted automatons. Read in place of sleep aids.

Anne Holappa says

two finnish female in London. interesting setting. could not believe that the author is male, he had some feminine manners familiar with more to do with chick-lit novels. the plot went too slowly for me, I admit skipping a few pages - which is not good. overall rating: not bad.
