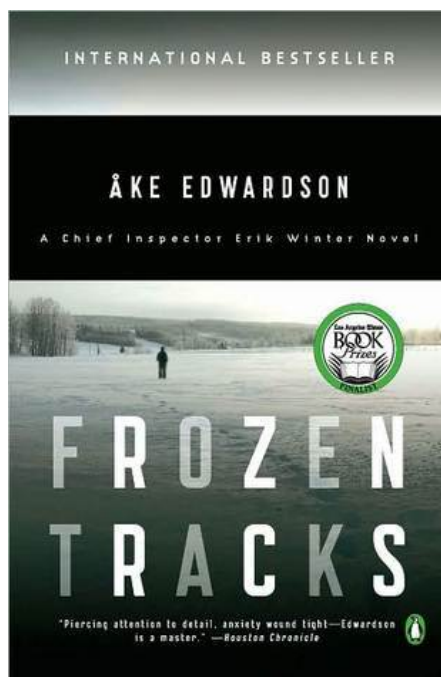




Frozen Tracks

Åke Edwardson

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From the land of the midnight sun, a compelling and dark thriller by a master of crime fiction

The autumn gloom comes quickly on the Swedish city of Gothenburg, and for Detective Inspector Erik Winter the days seem even shorter, the nights bleaker, when he is faced with two seemingly unrelated sets of perplexing crimes. The investigation of a series of assaults and a string of child abductions take Winter to "the flats", the barren prairies of rural Sweden whose wastelands conceal crimes as sinister as the land itself. Winter must deduce the labyrinthine connections between the cases before it is too late and his own family comes into danger. Stylish, haunting, and psychologically astute, *Frozen Tracks* features characters who would be at home in any American procedural, but with a sensibility that is distinctly European. *Frozen Tracks* will appeal to fans of Henning Mankell and George Pelecanos, and to anyone who relishes superbly crafted crime novels.

Frozen Tracks Details

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Author : Åke Edwardson

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Mystery, Crime, European Literature, Scandinavian Literature, Fiction

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From Reader Review Frozen Tracks for online ebook

harryknuckles says

A number of students have been attacked in Gothenburg. Inspector Winter and his team are puzzled, not only by the strange mark the weapon leaves, but also the sometimes evasive nature of the students themselves. Are they trying to hide something?

Meanwhile, young children are being abducted from playgrounds across the city. A man offering sweets is tempting them into his car, only to return them before anyone notices. The parents pick up on it from their child's stories, and report it. However, each incident is reported to a different police station. There's no system of co-ordination and no connection is made. That is until the abduction results in the man assaulting a small boy and abandoning him in nearby woods. Then, the investigation must begin in earnest, if an escalated crime is to be prevented...

This is the third of Edwardson's novels to have won the Swedish Crime Academy Prize for Best Crime Novel and the second of his that I have read. Anyone who has read any of these before will probably have the measure of Edwardson's style by now: crimes come to be solved through conversation and discussion among colleagues, a slow accrual of thought and ideas, pensive examinations. There's little explosive action, or even blood: it's a habit of Edwardson's to turn his head away from violence, and merely describe its effects. We know a young boy is assaulted, but we have no idea of any specifics, the only clue we have is that his parents are told "he will see again". This is all the reader ever knows about the specifics of the assault. While I admire the flash-free nature of his style, I'm not sure about this habit of shying away from describing any kind of violence. The resulting crimes, and sometimes their investigation, can feel a little sketchy and amorphous.

In Edwardson's novels Inspector Winter is only the figurehead, and the focus is often as much on other investigators as him. These are very much team novels. As a result, and due to their dialogue-heavy nature, they may be slow-paced but they paradoxically read quite quickly. Frozen Tracks is a long novel, but it didn't feel it.

Another habit of Edwardson's is that he seems to break things off - interrogations, discussions - at the point when they really seem to be getting somewhere. Though this may only seem odd given that - as there are passages from the criminals point of view - we know more than the police, which has the unfortunate effect of sometimes making them seem a little slow in their investigations, regardless of whether they are or not!

Overall, there are many things I admire about Edwardson's novels, but he has stylistic habits that I think I'm just not used to (rather than them being bad), which somewhat prevent me from putting him at the top of the tree of Scandinavian crime writers.

Bro says

This story held me just captivated enough to keep reading, even though something about Edwardson's writing style really annoyed me. There were things I liked about this book: the personal lives of the detectives; the role of the cold, gray climate; the whole Christmas factor...made it a cozy read. I held out for

what I thought was sure to be a great suspenseful ending, and the payoff wasn't entirely satisfactory. The last 30 or so pages of this book are so ambiguous and convoluted that I had to keep going back and rereading. Then it ended so abruptly that I was afraid I'd missed something. Edwardson may pride himself on his style of writing, but this reader wasn't terribly impressed.

Kirsten says

There's maybe something wrong about enjoying dark frozen murder stories in the middle of Wisconsin winter, but whatever.

Olivia says

I read these book way too fast. I will eventually have to re-read them.

Again Edwardson has managed to generate a fresh and compelling police procedural using his wonderful character DCI Erik Winter.

Cleverly conceived and well written. Twists and turns. Desperation at Christmas time.

Winter has fast become one of my favourite fictional cops.

Looking forward to the next instalment and the re-read.

Juanita says

Review: **Frozen Tracks** by Ake Edwardson. 10/21/2017

It takes some time to get used to Ake Edwardson's writing style but once I got use to it the story moved along. His writing at times slows down the story but it's haunting and psychologically clever. The author doesn't create a lot of suspense but his plot is well developed and he isn't cautious when describing how the violence effects or the emotions it leaves behind for the reader. Edwardson creates great characters and I enjoyed the police procedurals but wished the investigator would pep-up some so I won't figure out what comes next before he does.

The story setting is Gothenberg, Sweden and features Detective Erik Winter and his team investigating a sudden rash of assaults on male college students, who have been bludgeoned from behind suffering severe head trauma. The mark left on the head is some kind of symbol as if the person was branded. Detective Winter has his hands full with another unconnected case that he just obtained. This case is a sudden simultaneous abduction of four-year-old nursery school children who are lured into a car by tempting a child with candy. This case puts stress and pressure on Detective Winter because it places his daughter in danger who attends one of the understaffed schools that was hit by the predator. Members of his team are also showing signs of intense personal issues which affect their focus on crime.

There is high priority on both of these cases which holds Winter's back from his plans of traveling for Christmas. Because of the nature of the crimes it was more important to show leadership and team work.

Some of the facts about the cases are revealed through a flow of vital information among team members. Plus, it was a plus when the author disclosed much of the sordid secrets behind the crimes. The story kept me interested throughout the book...

Monty says

My first exposure to this writer, who appears to have a stronger bias towards character development than plot. The inner thought processes of the characters are intimate and detailed; so much so that I felt a strong sense of disquiet with the contrasting viewpoints of young children and the developing "predator" who stalks them.

In general, the plot is an investigative procedural affair with Inspector Winter et al operating in the midst of two apparently unrelated cases.

I wasn't able to finish reading the book. (Thats actually very rare for me!) I just don't like reading about threats to children (or animals for that matter). My inability to continue should not be viewed as a negative reflection upon the writer. Instead, it is an indication of the effectiveness of his ability to induce a visceral response in this reader.

I will return to it when I'm better prepared mentally.

Chris says

I am trying out different Scandinavian detective story authors. This story was "3-stars good." I liked Erik Winter and the other detectives on his team involved in the cases. There were 2 cases happening at the same time which ended up being related. That means there were many characters (with Swedish names) being introduced. There is a lot of dialogue in this book; so with all those people being interviewed, it did make for pages and pages of dialogue. But some of it I really enjoyed because of the dry wit of those Gothenburger police officers. Also the stories took place during winter and Christmas time, and I enjoyed reading about how the Swedish celebrate. The plot was pretty good, too. But this was definitely it for me and Edwardson. I am reading another Mankell, then my first Karin Fossum.

Martina Sartor says

"They say in heaven love comes first, We'll make heaven a place on earth, Ooh heaven is a place on earth."

Un autore ancora tutto da scoprire, qui in Italia. Questo è il primo suo libro pubblicato da noi, ma è del 2001 ed è il 5° della serie col commissario Winter. Nel frattempo in patria Edwardson è diventato uno degli scrittori di thriller più acclamati. E con ragione: dato che scrive già da tempo, non si colloca nella scia degli scrittori usciti alla ribalta sull'onda del successo di Stieg Larsson. Piuttosto si avvicina ai romanzi del connazionale Mankell, sia per stile che per tipo di thriller. Non gioca su colpi di scena clamorosi o su effetti a tutti i costi. La narrazione è molto raffinata e pacata. Il tema toccato in questo libro, gli abusi sull'infanzia e la sparizione di bambini, è trattato con tono molto lieve e attento. Anche le indagini di Winter, Ringmar e soci sono condotte più di testa, direi, che non basandosi su indizi clamorosi, scoperte dell'ultim'ora o simili. Winter indaga cercando di porsi allo stesso livello dei bambini che erano spariti e poi ritrovati, cercando di entrare nel loro modo di ragionare e di vedere le cose. Un modo molto sottile che impegna il lettore in una lettura attenta ai particolari. Anche il modo in cui viene presentato il "cattivo" di turno mette in evidenza non solo le sue 'malefatte' ma anche il substrato che lo ha condotto a comportarsi così.

Un libro da leggere con calma e gustarsi pian piano, anche affezionandosi ai personaggi e alle loro vite complicate.

Linda Branham Greenwell says

Read it in one day. Chief Inspector Erik Winter and his team are trying to solve a recent series of crimes where several male college students have been bludgeoned from behind. Who could be behind such a crime ? and why?

At the same time there is also a series of other crimes occurring on young preschool children. The children tell their parents that a man gave them candy and talked to them in his car while they were at preschool. But the kids are back in class - and no one even noticed that they had been missing for a short time. The parents call the police - but they are unsure if it really happened - or if their kids are just "imaginative."

I love the character development - and how we get to feel as if we really know the main characters. Their good times and bad times

Lucy says

This book was a typical crime thriller which forms part of the Inspector Winter series. I have never read any Inspector Winter books before but I will certainly look out for them. He is a likeable chap (unlike his fellow cantakerous literary detectives comme Morse and Wallender) and he seems to be affected quite deeply by the circumstances of the case (which is often poorly done in crime writing).

I thought it was an interesting and slightly different story and I had no idea what the twist/who the bad guy actually was - despite being introduced to him in the first few chapters.

My criticism is limited to 2 matters. 1, it ended far too abruptly for my tastes, almost like the author ran out of steam. DONT READ THE LAST PAGE FIRST WHATEVER YOU DO! Secondly the translation was fairly dire. I've now read a number of swedish crime books which have been poorly translated (for example poofter is spelt thus not pooftah nor would a child refer to a man as a mister or the mister). Such is the nature of the book (hardly great work of literature) that it doesnt really detract from the stories, however, it is sad that publishers are so keen to make a fast buck with a ripping yarn that they compromise on the translation.

Nevertheless a good read and I highly recommend it for some thrilling late night pageturning.

Kristin says

a review, as requested by ted...

this novel was a good read, has some engaging dry humor, moves right along at a good pace, has nice human elements to the story, has good characters. on the downside, edwardson often takes us into the mind (and point of view) of the criminal, who is something of a cliché - and i'm not sure having this point of view added to the story. as a whole, it's not the most original story, but the interesting characters give it enough newness to keep the story alive. it gets a bit confusing at the end... or maybe this was because i was reading it in bits and pieces during the baby's naps! reasonably satisfying overall (and sometimes hard to put down), so i'd recommend it but (ted...) am not sure i'm a complete convert to this series.

Helen says

Set in Gothenburg in winter. Some of this series is not translated into English, and of those that are not all are readily available, so this one is somewhere in the middle of the sequence and I haven't read any others. Contains some nice dry humour (as well as some strange examples of repetition - whole sentences are repeated). There are two ongoing cases which turn out to be connected (although the perpetrator is not, as I began to think, the same person!) While the detective's plans for Christmas are predictably spoiled he does at least get away afterwards and has a happy home life, unlike so many others. Good - and good also on the background details of a Swedish December (St. Lucia and Christmas customs) - although I must quibble a bit at the idea of the English family making their Christmas puddings so late! Anyway, enjoyable, and I will look out for this author but he is not readily found in libraries or bookshops here.

Ed says

Six-Word Review: Unrelated crimes come together - eventually solved.

I have mixed feelings about Edwardson's style. Maybe I like more detailed descriptions of the criminal acts or of the violence that can erupt when the miscreant is discovered. On the other hand, his books are truly mysteries where the reader is sometimes ahead of the fictional police and sometimes behind.

The story revolves around two criminal acts: the beatings of random college students who are left with a distinctive mark by the assailant's weapon and school children being lured into a man's car with candy. The second rash of suspicious actions becomes a high priority when one child is beaten and another kidnapped.

The question becomes are the two related and if so how and why. DCI Winter and his team try to figure it all out. In the process, Winter's own family is targeted. The process involves a lot of discussion by those working the case. These discussions eventually lead them to a solution. This book could be called a police procedural but not in the usual sense as the clues are not so much discovered by the investigators as they are uncovered by the team as a group.

Excellent plotting, interesting dialogue, and good characterizations all make this a fine story. The ending is satisfying, though a bit of a downer. This was my first Edwardson book and I felt no need to have read the previous books in the series.

Bernie says

This felt like the longest of the series so far. I don't mean that as negative. The story has many angles which are cleverly resolved as the book goes along. The story is set against the backdrop of the Christmas season. The sting is the now familiar city of Gothenburg. This time around the author Åke Edwardson has explored the ongoing characters more. As with any workplace where people are working together there are entwined relationships which bring their own tensions.

I am not sure how the title Frozen Tracks link to the story other than perhaps the season in which it is set. No murders this time around but rather some situations that would put most on edge. Inspector Winter is as

always the consummate workaholic with a strong touch of insomnia.

He or should I say his team do crack the case but tensions are fraught as there are competing demands. The end was for my part satisfying and I enjoyed the read. I am reluctant to describe the plot in any detail as this may spoil the enjoyment that others would get from the book.

As I write I have already started the next one Sail of Stone. It is good discovering an author and being able to read several in the series and not be waiting for the next one.

Toni Osborne says

Book3, in the Erik Winter series

This author is slowly growing on me or is it that I am now becoming more accustomed to his style, a style that is haunting and psychologically shrewd. "Frozen Tracks" is a superbly crafted crime novel, a compelling and dark thriller, definitely the best I have read from this author so far.

A glimpse into the story:

DCI Erik Winter and his team are baffled by a rash of beatings in Gothenburg that have nearly killed several young men, a distinctive mark left by the attacker's mysterious weapon leads them to believe they have a serial offender on their hands. The mystery is: why is someone doing this and how far will he go...

...

At the same time, the police force is faced with another high priority that is also escalating. At first, police treat reports of nursery school children being lured to a car of a strange "mister" offering candy with importance but when a boy is found badly beaten in the woods and another is kidnapped from a school yard the s..t hits the fan ... One of the children at the school is Winter's daughter, without question he wants in on the investigation and his first instinct tells him there might be a connection between these two major cases. Gradually the plot lines converge and the suspense and intrigue rapidly intensifies when the monster the police are hunting for targets Winter's family in order to fulfill his sadistic needs.

The story highlights the importance of team work and good leadership, the dialogue is heavy in nature and many facts are revealed through a free flow of vital and trivial information among team members. Once I became tuned in to the names and the culture differences I didn't mind the slow pacing of the plot's rhythm, it created the perfect tempo to divulge all the sordid secrets behind the crimes. Although the author stays away from graphically detailing violence he never shies from describing its effects or the emotions it leaves behind. The plotting is well-constructed and carefully developed from start to finish resulting in a gripping police procedural saga populated with a very engaging and well-drawn cast. Although the ending is rather gloomy there are no loose ends and the mystery is played out full circle.
