

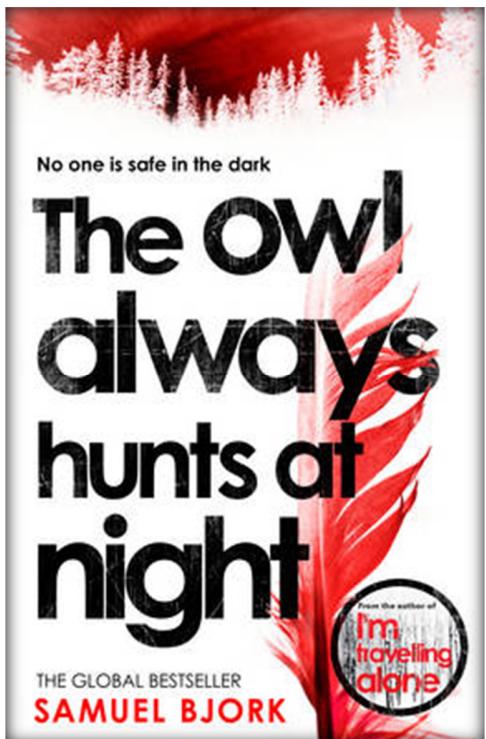


Helping you choose
your next book



Lovereading Reader reviews of **The Owl Always Hunts at Night** by Samuel Bjork

Below are the complete reviews, written by Lovereading members.



Michelle Hodson

Fabulous characters. An unusual plot. This is a perfect example of the Scandi Noir at its best. Totally absorbing. I couldn't put it down!

An excellent read. The characters in this novel are so well drawn that you instantly know them and are invested in them and their investigation. Mia Kruger is a young homicide detective fighting demons of her own. Her boss Holger Munch is the experienced detective still coming to terms with his marriage breakdown. Together they must solve a grisly murder with the unexpected help which comes from a young hacker. This is a well written and gripping thriller.

Les Wood

If you liked Jo Nesbo's 'The Snowman' you will love this; a story that weaves, undulates and draws you in to reading when you should be doing other things!

The premise of this book was quite intriguing and the storyline didn't disappoint. The interweaving of characters, their flaws and shortcomings took us back to almost the early 50's sunshine children, child depravation, institutional life, alcoholism, depression, divorce and strange ritual murder. It had the lot and was none the worse for it as the story twisted and turned, introduced new characters to throw you off the scent. All protagonists are inexorably drawn to the startling finish which has consequences for the main characters going forward from this. Brilliant!!

Richard Coe

5 stars, crime fans are in for a treat as this is a great book. Instantly readable, the pages disappear very quick as you gobble them up. The chapters are short and concise, some 80 in total, just how I like a book to be written.

A strangled 17 year old naked female is found in woodland near Hurum, south of Oslo by a botanist and the experienced homicide investigator Holger Munch is called to investigate. Her name is Camilla Green, it is a bad one and takes Munch the whole book to solve the crime!

I really liked Munch, he is a divorced, over-weight, 54 year old detective with a heart of gold and is particularly close to his granddaughter Marion. He has a big brain and likes brainteasers. He has a challenging relationship with his boss Rikard Mikkelsen but gets on well with his team especially a talented but troubled colleague called Mia Kruger.

The book includes detail about feathers, pentagrams, candles, a wig, body posing, animal feed and you learn about the different types of owl in Norway. A billionaire is also in the mix.

As you might expect the book contains a number of brilliant hackers, why are the Scandinavians so good at breaking into computer systems and networks?

This is the second in a series, the first being 'I'm travelling alone'. I am already looking forward to the next instalment of Holger Munch.

You can follow Richard on Twitter: @Kajima_Rich

Phylippa Smithson

Yet another star shines from the Nordics Premier league of authors bringing absorbing thrillers to the UK book shelves.

One of the key strengths in 'The Owl Always Hunts at Night' is that it introduces the crime investigators as real people, living in the shadow of their real and troubled lives, yet having to force such troubles aside to focus on solving the crime.

The crime is the discovery of the body of a young woman whose body is posed on a bed of feathers. There is nothing that makes the subsequent investigation easy. Once identification is complete – made difficult as a result of the absence of any substantial forensic evidence – the investigating team lead by renowned Swedish investigator Munch, discover that the woman has been living in a

privately run shelter for young people who have endured great difficulties in their childhood and early adult lives.

But it takes the re-introduction of former member of Munch's team, Mia Kruger, who had been living a hermit's life after breaking down further to the loss of her twin sister, to apply her unique and very certainly non-conforming style of investigating to drive the case to a successful conclusion.

This is great, fast-paced and hard hitting fiction. How do those Swedes manage to keep bringing such reading into our worlds?

Helen Treadwell

I particularly liked the character of Mia who is a brilliant detective but struggling with personal issues. A tense, exciting story building to an epic final scene.

From the author of 'I'm Travelling Alone', also featuring Holger Munch and Mia Kruger.

This book has been translated from the Norwegian and is a typical example of Nordic Noir crime fiction.

I chose this book based on the intriguing description and wasn't disappointed. I hadn't realised it was the second in the series but this wasn't a problem at all. After I'd finished this book, I tracked down and read the first one and enjoyed that just as much.

The story focuses on the two characters mentioned above, both in their police work and also their private lives. I particularly liked the character of Mia who is a brilliant detective but struggling with personal issues.

The story begins with the body of a young woman, arranged in a particular way. The race is on to follow any clues to find out the killer, before it happens again. The prologue with the vicar was intriguing and I couldn't work out how it fitted in the plot at all. A tense, exciting story building to an epic final scene.

I look forward to the next in the series, especially as the last page ends with some unfinished business regarding Mia's sister.

Maxine Broadbent

It is a long time since I have read such a complex yet easy to follow crime novel with such a fascinating and large set of engaging

characters. Superb plotting.

I found this book a very satisfying read, with an extraordinary set of characters who were totally believable. Although it is the second book in a series featuring detectives Holger Munch and Mia Kruger, it read very easily to me as a standalone novel. The body of a young seventeen year old girl, Camilla Green, has been discovered, ritualistically arranged and surrounded by owl feathers and candles.

The course of the murder investigation is seen through the eyes of various characters. These main characters are often deeply flawed and struggling with individual troubles. Problems include divorce, drug and alcohol addiction and gambling. If this sounds depressing it does not come across as such. These people are real with lives quite outside the death of a young girl. Despite the multiple viewpoints and the intricacies of the plot, the story is very easy to follow and it is gripping.

I found the book very well crafted, absorbing and a very pleasurable read, with absolutely no loose ends that I could find.

Highly recommended.

Sabine Little

An enjoyable second instalment.

I had thoroughly enjoyed 'I'm Travelling Alone', the first book in the series featuring Holger Munch and Mia Krüger, and had been looking forward to the second instalment. Both Munch and Krüger have complex histories, and I enjoyed getting to know the characters in the first book, and how their histories became intertwined with the plot.

*'The Owl Always Hunts At Night' follows much the same pattern, the back stories of Munch, Krüger and their team get further developed, and most chapters end on a cliff hanger...nevertheless, it didn't grip me in quite the same way as the previous book. There are a lot of people and sub-plots to keep track of, at times connecting in surprising ways. The misdirects are enjoyable, but it is hard to remain emotionally invested in such a wide array of characters. Having said that, it is enjoyable to "get to know" the various protagonists, with some minor characters being fleshed out, when, in other books, they might simply be there to "feed" the complexities of one or two main characters. **If you can suspend disbelief and make your peace with a considerable number of unlikely coincidences, then this***

is a good way to pass a few hours, and the end managed to draw me in, eager for book no. 3.

You can follow Sabine on Twitter: @sabinelittle

Alfred Nobile

This was a bleak tale and a slow burner of a read. Never the less a finely written tale with plenty of red herrings and false clues.

It begins with a botanist discovering the body of a young girl posed in what looks like a ritualistic killing.

Enter Holger Munch, an overweight detective; who is carrying the baggage of his divorce years previously. Also Mia Kruger, an enigmatic detective who is on suspension pending a psychological assessment.

Munch breaks the rules by enlisting Mia's help. Is this because she does not play by the rules and this case may need this to be solved.

The writing was crisp and of a high quality. The interplay between well rounded characters excellent.

I was interested in the dynamic between Munch and Mia as this gave great insights into these two people and why they attract and repulse each other.

This is book two in this series and can be read as a standalone. But I will be looking for book one.

Thanks to Lovereading for the ARC. Deserved 4 stars.

Alan Brown

An intricate horrible murder puzzle in Norway. How a flawed team copes.

A sinister start with macabre undertones. The author not only describes an awful crime and the procedures used to solve it but also focuses on the frailties of the team and team members, the crossover between personal and professional lives and the strengths of the individuals that form the team. A sort of 360 degree analysis which feeds into this different approach from the writer.

The story is pacy but detailed helped by the structure of 80 chapters in around 400 pages

This is a standalone story but the reader will have a deeper understanding if they have read the first book.

A fascinating story that keeps the reader's mind on the page.

Angela Rhodes

Norway, 2012, the body of a naked young woman is found in the woods surrounded by feathers, in her mouth a white flower.

Detective Holger Munch needs Detective Mia Kruger, which is all well and good but Mia is a woman on the edge since losing her twin sister and she is struggling with life. The case is not as easy as the team first thought and if it wasn't for a hacker, they would have never have uncovered the one thing that can help them. Now the hunt is on, Mia and the team are hunting a clever, unnerving killer and he is hunting them!

Loved this book, creepy and gripping, it will have you checking the windows, doors and over your shoulders, it will give you sleepless nights but boy is it worth it!!

Excellent book.

Nikki Whitmore

Another series to get hooked on.

I'm a sucker for anything Scandinavian, especially crime fiction, so I was really pleased to get the chance to review 'The Owl Always Hunts at Night'.

Maybe it's something to do with reading in translation but there is a very specific rhythm to Bjork's prose which I loved. For want of a better expression, it just flowed. The crime itself is pretty dark and whilst I wasn't totally convinced by some aspects of the plot, I am now a big fan of detective Mia Kroner, her boss Holger Munch and the dynamics of the whole police team. I'd not read the first book in this series (I'm Travelling Alone) but there was some subtle recapping which stopped me feeling like I'd missed too much. I will be going back to the start to catch up on what I've missed though.

If you like a bit of 'nordic noir' and you're looking for a new series to get into, this seems like a solid place to start.

You can follow Nikki on Twitter: @njwhitters

Louise Woods

A quick read with a familiar writing style making it easy to get into. Not too heavy a plot, with a few twists, but I was expecting more. A good train or plane read.

I don't usually read crime so I was interested to see if this book would capture my interest.

I was immediately drawn into the story, and wanted to read on, and I enjoyed the light writing style, which made it a good book to dip into.

While I thought the premise of the book was a good one, something about it seemed a little rushed, and there were unexplored avenues to the plot. A lot of references were made to the first book about this detective so I'm not sure it is a good standalone book, just as it got into the story we were taken off to something that happened before, events that didn't really tie in to this books plot in my opinion.

I'm afraid I couldn't help feeling I'd read or watched this before. While the way it was written meant I had a clear picture of the characters and their actions in my mind, it all seemed too familiar. Like every crime drama on TV I could visualise the crime room at the police station, and could pretty much predict what was going to happen next. The worn down detective with family issues, looking back on mistakes he has made in his life with regret, the aloof sidekick whose own personal life has left them on the edge, with only their work relationships to cling to.

It all seemed a little too easy, the way his family link to the plot clearly for the second time makes me question how many more in this series would work.

It wasn't a bad book, I'd be interested to see what regular crime readers think, but it hasn't made me want to read the first one. I'd recommend it if someone is looking for a quick read, and they enjoy this genre.

Rebecca Kirkby

This book is good, worth reading, but feels more like a draft than a finished book.

To start with I enjoyed reading this book, but at the end I was left with a feeling that something was missing. The ending seemed quite rushed, and there was a twist in the storyline that was rather clichéd.

There were questions regarding some of the main characters that went unanswered which could be due to it being the second book in a series. Also

there were storylines that weren't fully fleshed out and explored (possibly because there are so many to try and keep the reader from guessing who the bad guy was).

Overall, I haven't been left wanting to find out what happens next and feel a little disappointed. I found the book absorbing to begin with, but don't feel as though it got the ending it deserved.

Lesley Hart

Mia Kruger and Holger Munch-Norwegian police investigators, together for a second gripping book, involving a naked young woman's body found in a wood, will keep you guessing the murderer's identity!

This second book in the Munch and Kruger series, opens with a young woman's body being discovered, in a pentangle of candles, naked on a bed of owl's feathers. The story becomes more sinister, involving computer hackers and the Animal Liberation Front and the crime's plot evolves.

The research appears faultless, which adds to the believability of the crime, and means that the reader is hooked and unable to accurately guess the murderer's identity.

Holger Munch and Mia Kruger, the investigators within the team have a supportive respect for each other and Mia's emotional situation and 'go it alone' mentality adds an extra dimension of fear and layering to the story.

I am eager to read the first and subsequent novels in this gripping series.

Maz Tucker

A really good book with lots of twists and turns. The writer draws you in slowly to story and you gradually learn about the characters and their issues and problems.

The Story grips you from the first page. The team trying to solve the crime have lots of false starts and false leads, but together they get there in the end.

This was a 1st book by this author that I have read, and really enjoyed it.

Good solid crime thriller.