



Kalteis

Andrea Maria Schenkel

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München, Ende der 30er Jahre: Süß und sehnsüchtig ist der Traum vom Glück in der großen Stadt – auch Kathie träumt ihn und entflieht der Enge des dörflichen Lebens. Manch eine ist hier schon unter die Räder gekommen, aber sie wird es schon schaffen. Oder? Dunkelhaarig, kräftig und hübsch ist sie, wie die Frauen, die seit einiger Zeit in München und Umgebung spurlos verschwinden. Der Teufel scheint auf dem Fahrrad unterwegs zu sein.

Kalteis Details

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From Reader Review Kalteis for online ebook

Béatrice says

Je ne suis pas sûre d'avoir tout compris (je l'ai lu en allemand) mais c'était suffisamment prenant et facile (à l'exception des mots d'argot !) pour que j'aille au bout, avec plaisir.

Karen says

Whilst ICE COLD is the second book from German writer Andrea Maria Schenkel, it's the first book - THE MURDER FARM - that I have to start out mentioning. I still remember my reaction to that book - mesmerised, enthralled, vaguely stunned. Needless to say, trying not to set expectations for ICE COLD was a tricky undertaking.

Set in 1930's Munich, ICE COLD is the progression of a rapist serial killer. Various viewpoints are told chapter by chapter, each voice eerily intimate, and personal, distinguished by a change in font to give the reader a visual queue, as well as a clear change in voice. The killer moves aimlessly, passively through a life punctuated suddenly by extreme violence and depravity. ICE COLD tells a story that is brutal, hopeless, stark, bleak and extremely discomforting. It's dark, intense and extremely uncomfortable reading. It's also jarringly different in that there is no discernible plot, heading for a resolution or at the least, an explanation. This is a series of short, sharp punches to the readers sensibility, finalising in no resolution, no closure, no analysis, no neat ends and no explanations.

There are a lot of similarities to THE MURDER FARM, in the style, the structure and the tone of ICE COLD. But there's something much bleaker and more confrontational about ICE COLD. Just in case it sounds like this is a book that I hated, exactly the opposite is true. It's short, sharp, tight as hell, uncomfortable, strange, brutal, and extremely memorable.

Marc says

Ice Cold is a collage of at times unrelated events surrounding a serial murderer and rapist. While a person is caught and executed the reader is left uncertain on if there are more.

An aspect to the story I did not like was that as the story switched between narrators that the font, font size, and margins changed. This was distracting.

While it did not happen often another distracting element was random phrases that were in bold. For example, on page 16 "I cycled along beside him for **quite a way**." I believe these were done by the person that translated the work from UK English to US English as a reminder to research words and phrases. The translator forgot to do a final pass and to remove their reminder marks.

The U.S. English hardcover copy that I read is missing the Acknowledgments section that's available other editions. This is where the reader discovers the novel is based on a true story.

I'm rating the story as "4" but the production value of the U.S. hardcover edition is "3."

Owl says

Las sich sehr schnell, war eigentlich auch gut geschrieben, aber bei mir wollte der Funken einfach nicht überspringen.

Ich denke, mit all diesen Hintergrundfakten hätte man aus dem Stoff doch etwas mehr rausholen können. Es war gut, aber irgendwie... zu distanziert...

Chris says

3.5

Disclaimer: ARC via Netgalley

Andrea Maria Schenkel is Germany's answer to Britain's Ruth Rendell.

Can I end the review now, I mean what more do you need to know?

Schenkel's novel deals with a sexual murderer during the late Weimer period. (If you have read Maria Tatar's Lustmord, you should check this book out). Told in a variety of voices, the book is as compelling as Rendell at her best.

At one level the book is a psychological study of a killer, at another level it is a study of a girl wanting more, and at a third level it is a look at those who are either killed or those who are left behind. The reader is placed in the position of listening investigator. While at the beginning, it almost seems too multi-perspective but as the reader gets use to the format, as the format evens out, whichever it is becomes the only way to tell this story.

And it is grippingly told.

Schenkel aptly deals with the differing perspectives without making any one character too much of a dislikable idiot or too much an unbelievable stellar of perfection. The only change to the pattern is the reader's interaction with the murderer. With that character Schenkel walks the fine line of presenting the character while not justifying his behavior. She walks this line very well, and the passages of the book involving this character work.

It's not your average murder mystery that's for show.

Steffi says

Sich aus Zeugen- und Täteraussagen sowie dem Erlebnisbericht eines der späteren Opfer setzt sich die auf Tatsachen basierende Geschichte über einen Frauenmörder zusammen. Am Rande erfährt man einiges über

das München Ende der 30er Jahre – für meinen Geschmack aber zu wenig über das Nazi-Regime, das doch gerade in der „Stadt der Bewegung“ besonderen Einfluss hatte. Lediglich in der Einleitung wird deutlich, dass es eine solche Art von Verbrechen unter der NS-Ideologie eigentlich nicht mehr geben durfte (und eben diese Verknüpfung von Verbrechen und NS-Alltag und –Ideologie wird im weiteren Verlauf nicht mehr verfolgt). Spannend fand ich vor allem wie offensichtlich, junge Frauen, die in der Stadt ihr Glück machen wollen, dies im Grunde nur dadurch erreichen können, dass die wahllos mit Männern schlafen. Dieses Frauenbild, das man aus Beschreibungen der 20er Jahre (meist in Berlin spielend) kennt, z. B. aus Werken Irmgard Keuns, auch als Bestandteil einer Welt zu sehen, die inzwischen von den Nazis beherrscht wird, ist entlarvend.

Besser gefallen hat mir dennoch der Vorgänger Tannöd, weil in diesem noch viel eindrücklicher ein bestimmtes Milieu beschrieben wird.

Kin says

Affascinante la costruzione, la scrittura piana, la location, i personaggi. Notevole.

Katja says

"Kalteis" erzählt die Geschichte eines Frauenmörders im München der 30er Jahre. Dabei wird zwischen dem Verhör Kalteis' und den Taten unterschieden, die beklemmend den Weg der Opfer beschreiben. Ich konnte nach der Lektüre nicht schlafen. Fein komponiert. (gelesen 2007)

Evelyn says

This is a strange, cold, and ultimately unsatisfying book. It starts with the capture and execution of a serial killer, and then works its way backwards and forwards reviewing the events surrounding the last murder that occurred prior to his capture by providing the reader with a voyeuristic view of selected events in the killer's life and those of his victim that were ostensibly gleaned from the murder investigation, and the statements of witnesses and the murderer to investigators. However, it is very superficial. The story fails to provide any insights into the character of the murderer, or explain why he abused his wife and later killed the female victims other than a generic statement that he did it for the thrill of torturing and murdering the victim. It also fails to create much sympathy for the victims of the killer or their families, and its portrait of the final victim appears drawn from the stereotype of the poor farm girl who runs away to the big city to pursue her dreams of becoming rich and famous, and instead of achieving her goals becomes the victim of all the ills that can befall a naive person in the big city.

Rebecca Kightlinger says

It's October 1939, and Josef Kalteis, "an ethnic German, an Aryan, and in addition a member of the National

Socialist Workers' Party," has confessed to atrocities not even the Reich wants on its hands. His death warrant declares, "Noxious parasites on this nation, like this man, ice cold in his crimes as in his very name, must therefore be removed from it."

In *Ice Cold*, Schenkel lays out narrative with the cool authority of a Vegas blackjack dealer. Snap: Memorandum. Scene. Interrogation. Police report. Snap: First person. Third. Present tense. Past. But make no mistake: Schenkel's a shark. Having stacked the deck, she keeps you at the table by holding the ace until the very last hand.

It's rarely springtime in this chronicle of Germany from 1931 to 1939, and from the moment young Kathie Hertl steps off the train in Munich, the reader feels the chill. Kathie's search for a job takes her nowhere, and her search for a warm place to sleep takes her to Soller's Inn, where, like the other women she meets, she searches for a "fiancé" who will put a roof over her head. As she moves from man to man, losing sight of her dream of making a life in Munich, she recalls the warmth of her girlhood summers and knows that "they would always be the best summers of her entire life."

Into Kathie's wanderings Schenkel splices police reports, first-person interviews, and third person accounts of other German women and girls, as well as excerpts of police interviews with both Kalteis and his wife, Walburga. Time is nimble, and narrators often go unnamed. But the close reader is rewarded with story: tragedy unencumbered with sentiment, and brutality served up cold as ice.

Amy Curtiss says

I read it to get a feel for German thriller writing, and it was ok...I will probably seek out and read *Murder Farm*.

Alex-Mot-à-Mots says

Munich et ses environs, dans les années 1930. Nous suivons Kathie, jeune fille arrivée de sa campagne où elle ne veut plus être la bonne de sa famille, pour tenter de trouver un travail à la Grande Ville.

Difficile d'abord pour elle de trouver un toit et de quoi manger. Qui plus est, elle ne se présente pas à une place trouvée par une amie de sa mère. Non, Kathie préfère aller boire à la taverne le soir avec ses ami-e-s et, peut-être, finir dans le lit d'un homme pour la nuit.

Elle est naïve, Kathie, elle laisse sa valise à sa première adresse, son parapluie dans une autre. Elle vit au jour le jour.

Parallèlement à l'histoire de Kathie, nous lisons le compte-rendu de l'interrogatoire de Josef Kalteis.

Jusqu'à ce que les deux histoires se rejoignent, tragiquement.

Une écriture au couteau, rapide et sèche, efficace. En quelques phrases, l'auteure crée un lieu, un personnage et ses préoccupations.

Toutefois, à vouloir être brut, le texte est crue pour décrire certaines actions de Josef. J'ai été d'autant plus étonné que j'ai pu rencontrer l'auteure après une conférence : mère de 4 enfants s'étant mise à l'écriture de polars assez tard. Comment imaginer qu'elle dame bien sous tout rapport puisse écrire une réalité aussi crue ? Shocking ! Et pourtant...

Un roman court et efficace, vous l'aurez compris ; une lecture qui ne m'a pas laissée indifférente.

L'image que je retiendrai :

Celle du petit chapeau de Kathie qu'elle garde toujours sur la tête et qui permet aux amis de découvrir son cadavre.

<http://alexmotamots.fr/un-tueur-a-mun...>

Woogie! Kristin! says

Not what I was expecting when I read the inside flap. A very quick read and compelling. A tale of rape and murder involving a member of the National Socialist Party in Munich, late 1930s, but it's not really political at all other than the first few pages and then the NSDAP is mentioned perhaps a few times later offhand. The way the story is told is a series of interviews of the convicted murderer, those who knew the victim, people who or interacted with her in various situations prior, as well as stories of other women who had disappeared around the same time. It's short and difficult to put down because you truly feel like you can witness the series moving up to the murder even though some of the chapters are other victims. I thank the person who gifted this to me and plan to seek out other books by the author. Final note: I read the English translation.

Cerisaye says

I just finished reading, and am feeling decidedly unsettled, as though I need to wash it out of my system. In current parlance, this is a book that needs a Trigger Warning. A nasty, brutal and short narrative (much like the lives of those within) told from multiple POVs including rapist and murderer, victims, witnesses, fragmentary as a result, though use of different typefaces helps avoid confusion, mostly.

The setting is Munich during the late 30s and is based upon a real life case, using actual records. The novel begins with the execution of serial killer Josef Kaletis convicted of murdering young girls over a number of years, then goes back to tell the story of the crimes, from a psychological perspective. With its graphic depictions of rape and murder, this is not a book everyone will...enjoy is not the appropriate word here. Have the stomach for?

Its atmosphere of hopelessness and despair is certainly well conveyed, the poverty of lives and expectations that was the background to the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis during this period. Parts reminded me of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* by Alfred Döblin. You don't get much from characters other than their situations and outcomes. The overall mood is dark, bleak and profoundly depressing. You get the feeling this is an ongoing

story with no comfortably structured beginning-middle-end, a symptom of a general descent into darkness, on an individual and national level.

Undeniably powerful and well written, this novel has left some pretty horrible images in my head. I have *Murder Farm* by the same author in my 'To Read' folder on my Kindle, but I will leave it a while before immersing myself again in Schenkel's grim writing.

Richard says

Quite a difficult book to read and review. But it is a bold departure to the linear crime thriller. It begins with the final death sentence being upheld for political reasons and that execution being described. The writing shows that this is both a swift and complete act of capital punishment. The reader then reads on. We are introduced to Kathie, a young woman who has left home in the countryside, to get rich in the atmosphere and wealth of Munich; interspersed with her story we see snippets of the, now executed, prisoner's trial. I welcome this fresh approach to a story of this kind. The murder of a women by a serial killer which reveals the crimes after the fact with the reader wondering if they had the right man. As you learn about Kathie's story you consider her role in terms of coming across the murdered and whether she will be a victim or the catalyst to break the case. Unfortunately it doesn't quite work. The crimes appear random and terrifying in their escalation. We learn so little about the background of the women killed we cannot fully empathise and the man committing these atrocities fills one with disgust and despair as he appears quite mad. This sense isn't helped as there isn't a police investigation, we learn this information as though we were sitting in at the trial. One feels a loss for the hopes and dreams of the women whose lives are violently ended, they appear to do nothing to promote their demise other than to be caught alone and have their future denied. They seem all respectable women, in love and enjoying the benefits of their youth. A contrast is drawn as we learn more of Kathie's life as it drifts into begging and prostitution to survive. Unwilling to work in service hoping she will meet a man who will provide for her, based on her attraction rather than her industry and character. There are a number of ironies here. The story takes place in Germany prior to World War II and perhaps hints at a more prosperous future. No death should be passed over; whether a condemned prisoner, a married woman making plans or a child on the cusp of adulthood. However the English title is *Ice Cold*, perhaps implying the serial killers thoughts in committing his crimes. For me it is a book that leaves me cold and not fully engaged with any character to feel more than a passing interest in this story.
