



## Sun Storm

Åsa Larsson

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On the floor of a church in northern Sweden, the body of a man lies mutilated and defiled—and in the night sky, the aurora borealis dances as the snow begins to fall....So begins Åsa Larsson's spellbinding thriller, winner of Sweden's Best First Crime Novel Award and an international literary sensation.

Rebecka Martinsson is heading home to Kiruna, the town she'd left in disgrace years before. A Stockholm attorney, Rebecka has a good reason to return: her friend Sanna, whose brother has been horrifically murdered in the revivalist church his charisma helped create. Beautiful and fragile, Sanna needs someone like Rebecka to remove the shadow of guilt that is engulfing her, to forestall an ambitious prosecutor and a dogged policewoman. But to help her friend, and to find the real killer of a man she once adored and is now not sure she ever knew, Rebecka must relive the darkness she left behind in Kiruna, delve into a sordid conspiracy of deceit, and confront a killer whose motives are dark, wrenching, and impossible to guess....

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **Sun Storm Details**

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Author : Åsa Larsson

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## From Reader Review Sun Storm for online ebook

### Rachel Hall says

3.5 stars

After encountering the feisty Rebecka Martinsson in the fifth outing of this series and enjoying it immensely, it is interesting to see how Åsa Larsson's writing has acquired a certain polish as this series has progressed. At times I felt like the narrative in this first outing was a little awkward, the character of Rebecka Martinsson still carving out a role and personality for herself, whilst also being faced with the unenviable task of returning to a childhood home that she was effectively cast out of a decade previously. Memories are raw for Rebecka and as Larsson ventures more deeply into Martinsson's claustrophobic home it isn't hard to see why her hackles are quickly raised and her outward demeanour is so prickly. At times the translation appears somewhat clunky and the narrative occasionally jarring, but all in all this is a highly competent debut which sees a tax lawyer in Stockholm break out of her predetermined role to return to a home town where she has plenty of unfinished business.

Protagonist Rebecka Martinsson, is a tax lawyer who has seen her hard work take her from the northernmost town in Sweden (Kiruna) to a career in prestigious Stockholm law firm, Meijer and Ditzinger. Working seventy-hours a week to bill for an average of forty-two, Rebecka is living the life of a corporate bunny with a stressful workload, limited social fulfilment and nights of broken sleep. The shocking news of the murder of a religious celebrity in Kiruna, however, takes Rebecka right back to her earlier years when his identity is disclosed as Viktor Strandgård, a man who she knew well, along with his sister, Sanna. Having lost touch with her former friends when she was effectively ostracised from the town, she has no intentions of returning home but a call from Sanna, who discovered Viktor's mutilated body and has been identified as prime suspect sees Rebecka returning north. Contrary to all her intentions, Rebecka risks her job and forces herself to face the legacy of a past and confront the demons that drove her from the town and left her reputation in tatters but she is less certain that she will be able to help Sanna.

A near death experience saw Viktor Strandgård devote his life to God and instigate an impassioned Christian following in Kiruna, which involved unifying three separate churches. With a congregation of two-thousand, the combined entity, The Source of All Our Strength, is something of an institution that has secured the finances of its three full-time pastors, which the charismatic and manipulative Thomas Söderberg heads up. With the murder weapon and Viktor's bible found in the home of Sanna amounting to circumstantial evidence only, Rebecka is left to focusing on a possible motive and who might have framed Sanna for the murder. A close-lipped community makes things even tougher but threatening to expose some financial scandals proves fortuitous as the truth comes into sight. Admittedly there is little opportunity to see Rebecka do more than prying into tax/financial accounts and ruffling a few feathers. Sanna swings between truculent slights and silence and makes it difficult to believe a former close friendship ever existed between her and Rebecka. Given that Rebecka's specialism is in tax law her investigations are very intuitive and it proves easy to follow her logic. Taking on responsibility for Sanna's two daughters, Sara (11) and Lova (4) and keeping them out of the clutches of Sanna's domineering father, Olof Strandgård, sees Rebecka return to her grandmothers remote home in Kurvarra and cabin in Jiekajärvi and forced to rely on her grandmothers elderly neighbour, Sivving.

Investigating Inspector Anna-Maria Mella is heavily pregnant with her fourth child and her second in command, Sven-Erik Stålnacke officially takes the reins but is somewhat overawed by the press interest and defers to Mella. Inspector Fred Olsson and eager younger Sergeant Tommy Rantakyrö assist but it is jumped

up Assistant Chief Prosecutor Carl von Post (aka von Pisspot) who sees this as an opportunity to overturn his lowly outpost and get his talents recognised. Rebecka cooperates with Inspector Anna-Maria Mella who are both united in believing that Prosecutor Carl von Post is blinkered in his determination for a open and shut case and failing to see past Sanna as the guilty party. Much of this story felt very familiar but I think this was due to my reading in quick succession with another case which focused on a religious sect (The Inspector and Silence by Håkan Nesser).

The unique setting and feel of an insular community is well conveyed but if there is one thing lacking it is in interaction between characters which struggles to appear natural at times. Skipping to the fifth instalment, shows the considerable improvement in Larsson's writing but this relatively straightforward investigation with very few distractions works as an excellent introduction to the characters. Larsson leaves readers to piece together the fallout from the crime and impact on life in Kiruna but does hint at a future romance for Rebecka with her quick to inflame boss, Måns Wenngren.

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### Candi says

I needed to find a first-in-a-series book to read and had a hankering to read a crime novel. Having not previously read a Scandinavian crime book, I thought this was as good a time as any to give one a try. The thought of some astonishing landscape thrown into the mix appealed to me as well. I grabbed **Sun Storm** since it was readily available and I was happily entertained.

*"The Aurora Borealis twists and turns like a dragon in the night sky. Stars and planets are compelled to give way to her, this great miracle of shimmering light, as she makes her unhurried way across the vault of heaven."*

This stunning phenomenon endures even as the prominent evangelist Viktor Strandgard lies dying on the floor of his beloved church of The Source of All Our Strength set atop a hill in Kiruna, Sweden. Viktor Strandgard is eventually found dead by his sister, Sanna, who goes to the church following a bedside vision of her brother. Fearing for herself and her two daughters, Sanna contacts her old friend Rebecka Martinsson. A former member of this fundamentalist church, Rebecka is forced to face some stinging memories that she thought were finally behind her. As Sanna finds herself a possible suspect in Viktor's murder, Rebecka finds her role as a Stockholm tax attorney perhaps not quite suited to representing a "friend" with whom she has a very tenuous relationship at best. But Sanna is counting on their old bond and entrusts her case as well as the care of her young daughters to Rebecka.

Enter Anna-Maria and Sven-Erik, two investigators assigned to the case. I really liked Anna-Maria – pregnant, she has been placed on desk duty but still seems to be all too eager to get to the bottom of this case and away from her desk. She's one tough woman! Nothing seems to intimidate her, including the overly zealous band of hypocritical and evasive pastors of The Source of All Our Strength. Rebecka, too, must confront this group and does so with the strength of several years of animosity stemming from her history with the church and these leaders. I'm not quite certain of my feelings for Rebecka. I was definitely in her corner, but she was not always very likeable. Her caring for the little girls was commendable and her determination was admirable, but I couldn't always tolerate her personality. Perhaps she would grow on me in later installments of the series.

Overall, this was fast-paced, reasonably gruesome, and ultimately satisfying as a diversion from my usual

form of reading. I have come to realize that I need to pick up a good mystery/crime novel from time to time. I enjoyed trying to guess whodunit and this book definitely kept me on my toes. It took me a decent amount of time to figure things out. The last part of the book, even if not completely believable, was tense and exciting! Throw in some fabulous scenes of the Aurora Borealis and the lonesomeness and desolation of the expansiveness of the snowy landscape and you have a respectable, solid start to this series. 3 stars.

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### **Antonomasia says**

There probably is a bit too much exposition. But if you can't remember when you last got more than about 5 hours sleep, that is, frankly, absolutely fine. You'd miss anything more subtle. Unless, possibly, you're the ghost of Maggie Thatcher.

Can't put my finger on *why*, but I found this a little more clumsy and infodumping than Anne Holt. This one, in fairness, is a first novel and I've only read Holt's later books.

The crime is a typically bizarre and fantastical event - the murder and dismemberment of a beautiful man who was the figurehead of a cultish evangelical-type church in the far north of Sweden. (The first chapter tells us that he was unconscious or dead before the really gory stuff happened, which makes it somewhat less horrible. There also isn't a huge amount of detail about the mutilation and we hear about how hideous it is more via living characters' reactions than through descriptions of the corpse.)

It's common for murder mysteries to have a female victim who's portrayed as alluring; this is the first time I can recall one featuring a man who's considered hot by one or more characters (also inaccessible and ethereal due to his religious asceticism). Making it even more of a role reversal, he was once romantically rejected by the central detective characters, Stockholm lawyer Rebecka Martinsson, when they were both small-town teenagers.

One of the main reasons I'm reading these things, aside from the armchair tourism, is for the normal-working-life aspect of the investigators and supporting characters, it's mostly about work rather than the endless cooking and ruminating scenes that populate the mundane side of litfic, and seem somehow less realistic in terms of what takes up the headspace of someone who actually has a job. Thrillers and crime fiction are mostly about people doing stuff, literary fiction about thinking. (Sometimes you want a break from all that second-hand thinking.)

Some aspects of the investigators' private lives may be a little soapy, but there is something normal about them - in massive contrast to the crimes. That aspect I'm less keen on - though at least their removal from reality must make them less threatening to many readers. Whilst physically possible, they seem not a great deal more realistic than wizards and ghosts - something I hadn't quite realised before this year, not having read much crime fiction in book form since my teens, and which I'm surprised isn't pointed out more often. The action-thriller denouement of *The Savage Altar* was great fun - however I have a lot of respect for the storylines featuring grubby regional news kind of crimes in the Danish series *Unit One*; I also like social realism in an easily readable form alongside vicarious travel.

It's understandable that some reviewers don't much like Rebecka: she snaps at people frequently, she's irritable about 70% of the time, spends another 10% strongarming situations her way by quoting legislation, and if someone wants to compliment her, they call her 'fierce'. But "nice cop" DI Anna-Maria Mella is also there as a balancing force in the narrative. (It's interesting to have two parallel investigations going on where

the author doesn't favour one character over the other, this is no Holmes v LeStrade setup although Martinsson doesn't see it that way.) Like Sarah Lund, Martinsson reminds me of my mother as I saw her when I was a kid, not in a way that's weird or uncomfortable, but enough that on a deep level she strikes me as unusually realistic because of a primal sense that "that's what grownups are really like", especially as regards work and dealing with people in public. Though of course, a lot of them aren't.

Four stars because I enjoyed its cheesy B-movie imperfections and excellent showdown. Having ended up with three of this series unread - 2 & 3 on special offer, got 1 to start in the right place - I'm really looking forward to reading about Martinsson and Mella again (which is more than I could say for Anne Holt's Johanne Vik, whose series I started in the same way). I suspected that I'd find the sort of female characters I wanted to hear about in crime novels more than I did in litfic - where the emphasis is on what they're doing, not a set of ideas about Being A Woman that I'm expected to relate to but don't - and here I was right.

And four stars proudly because I don't want to modify based on 'perceived quality' in a nod to snobbery.  
Optional rant under spoiler tag. (view spoiler)

Από την αρχη της ιστορ?ας αντιλαμβ?νεσαι το ρ?λο των εκκλησιαστικ?ν θεσμ?ν της κοιν?τητας αλλα ειναι αδιαν?ητο ποσο βαθει? χωμ?νοι και παγιδευμ?νοι μεσα σε μια ιστορια του παρελθ?ντος που επαν?ρχεται στο προσκ?νιο με αφορμ? ?ναν φ?νο ειναι ?λοι τελικ? οι εξ?χοντες κ?τοικοι της κωμ?πολης και ειδικ? οι βαθει? θρησκευ?μενοι.

Εγωιστ?ζ,εκμεταλλευτ?ζ,βολεμενοι,?ξεστοι και επηρμενοι απολαμβ?νουν κυρ?ως τα υλικ? αγαθ? που απορρ?ουν εκμεταλλευ?μενοι την π?στη και την αφοσ?ωση των απλ?ν ανθρ?πων.  
Μεταξ? τους επικρατε? η σ?πια μυστικ?τητα, η μακ?βρια ενοχ?,η ασυνε?δητη χειραγ?γηση της μ?ζας ομως ειναι το μυστικ? της επιτυχ?ας τους.μια δυστυχισμ?νη επιτυχ?α βασισμ?νη στην παρ?νοια τη χαμερπεια και το α?μα.

Ολα αυτα καλε?ται να τα ξεδιαλ?νει σε γενικ? επ?πεδο η αστυνομικ?ς της ιστορ?ας η ?ννα -Μαρια Μελα με σ?νεση και ευαισθησ?α αλλα σε ειδικ? επ?πεδο ολα τα κομι?τια του παξιλ κολλ?νε μονο με τη βο?θεια της Ρεμπ?κα δικηγ?ρου απο Στοκχ?λμη,ωστ?σο φ?λη του νεκρο? και γνωστ? - ?γνωστη ?λων των εμπλεκομ?νων στην υπ?θεση αφο? η κωμ?πολη Κιρουνα στην οπο?α διαδραματ?ζονται ολα ειναι το μ?ρος που μεγ?λωσε ?ζησε και π?ρασε απο πολλ?ς καταστ?σεις πριν αναγκαστε? να φ?γει.

Διαφθορ? ψυχ?v, ηθικ?v αξι?v, συμπλεγματικοι χαρακτηρες ?λων των ψυχωτικων αποχρ?σεων, ?ψογοι οικογενει?ρχες,που κρ?βουν τοξικ?ς αρρ?στιες και εθισμο?ς σε κ?vουν να αμφιβ?λλεις μ?χρι την τελευτα?α στιγμ?, γιατι ενω απο νωρ?ς μπορεις να καταλ?βεις τον " ?νοχο" ,ειναι πραγματικ? δ?σκολο να διανοηθε?τε μεχρι που μπορε? να φτ?σουν κ?ποιοι ?νθρωποι με σκοπ? την προσωπικ? τους απολαβ? αξι?v αξιωμ?των και χρημ?των

## **Estibaliz79 says**

Soy consciente de que repito mucho lo de que un libro es "de lectura ágil y amena", pero, qué queréis: de eso es de lo que se trata precisamente; y si la historia no te ofrece ese mínimo, por más interesante que sea la premisa, entonces apaga y vámonos.

"Lectura ágil y amena" es ese mínimo exigible que le garantiza a un libro las dos estrellas (a no ser, claro está, que el argumento sea ridículo más allá de lo tolerable), porque al menos te ha hecho pasar el rato... la calidad literaria no está siempre garantizada, pero es, cuanto menos, aceptable (o simplemente pasable).

Creo que no hace falta ser muy listo para haber caído ya en la cuenta de que éste es uno de esos casos, y de ahí, acaso, la disertación... Porque de una historia que cae en lo simple y esquemático, e ídem sus personajes, poco más se puede sacar.

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## **Black Dog Reviews says**

Reading Swedish crime fiction makes me wonder: is Sweden really so full of murder and evilness? Or do the dark, cold winter days and nights encourage sinister novels focused on the dark area of the human psyche?

Sun Storm, winner of Sweden's Best First Crime Novel Award, deals with religion, hypocrisy, abuse, mental illness, and perhaps redemption over the course of the story. It's setting of Kiruna, the northernmost city in Sweden, is important. Its remoteness and isolation are integral to the story.

The story starts off when charismatic religious figure Viktor Strandgard is brutally murdered in the revivalist church he created, The Source of All Our Strength. Rebecca Martinsson returns to Kiruna, her hometown, to support Viktor's sister. The reader slowly learns Rebecca's past as she unravels the truth and protects Sanna's children from multiple forms of evil. Pregnant inspector Anna-Maria, her counterpart Sven-Erik, and a blow-hard Assistant Chief Prosecutor round out the cast.

Fans of Henning Mankell or Stieg Larsson's The Millennium Trilogy will appreciate Sun Storm.

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## **Chrissa Vasileiou says**

Λ?γες φορ?ς ?χω προβληματιστε? τ?σο για τη βαθμολογ?α εν?ς αστυνομικο? βιβλ?ου..Συν?θως οι επιλογ?ς και το ?νστικτ? μου δε με απογοητε?ουν στο συγκεκριμ?νο ε?δος..Εδ? μπορ? να πω πως συν?ντησα την εξα?ρεση του καν?να.

?χω ακο?σει πολλ? καλ? λ?για για την Asa Larsson και περ?μενα π?ς και π?ς να διαβ?σω κ?ποιο βιβλ?ο της..Σ?γουρα το συγκεκριμ?νο αποδε?χτηκε πολ? κατ?τερο των προσδοκι?ν μου..Εκνευριστικο? χαρακτ?ρες - ειδικ? οι 2 ηρω?δες, πρ?χειρα σκιαγραφημ?νοι, χωρ?ς β?θος, αρκετ? ερωτηματικ? στη ρο? της υπ?θεσης, καθ?λου αγων?α..Δεν μπ?ρεσα ?χι απλ? να ταυτιστ? με την ηρω?δα, ο?τε και με καν?ναν ?λλον εκε? μ?σα, αλλ? ο?τε καν να διαμορφ?σω συνα?σθημα..Δεν υπ?ρχε κ?ποιος να σε προκαλ?σει ρε παιδ? μου, να σε κ?νει να αναστεν?ξεις, να χαμογελ?σεις, να εκνευριστε?ς, να αγανακτ?σεις...?λο το βιβλ?ο ?ταν απλ? μια επ?πεδη αφ?γηση, χωρ?ς κορυφ?σεις, χωρ?ς αγων?α, χωρ?ς ?νταση, χωρ?ς focus στα συναισθ?ματα και το

χαρακτ?ρα των ηρ?ων.Ακ?μα και το περιβ?λλον,που τ?σο αγαπ?,μου φαιν?ταν ξ?νο - μ?λλον επειδ? η ιστορ?α διαδραματ?ζεται στα β?ρεια της χ?ρας,με το βαρ? χειμ?να και τις διαφορετικ?ς συν?θειες.

Δε ξ?ρω αν φτα?ει που ε?ναι το πρ?το της και ?σως δεν ?χει βρει ακ?μα τη φ?ρμα και τα πατ?ματα που χρει?ζονται..ΑΥΤΟ το βιβλ?ο ?μως,?τσι ?πως ε?ναι γραμμ?νο,για μ?να προσωπικ? δεν αξ?ζει π?νω απ? 2 αστερ?κια..Μ?νο και μ?νο για το ε?δος και για το σκηνικ?,τον αγαπημ?νο μου Σκανδιναβικ? χειμ?να.

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### **Bev Taylor says**

in a church in northern sweden a man is found brutally murdered - eyes gouged out, hands amputated and stabbed

this is the hero of the new church and is found by his sister and naturally she is a suspect. panicked she calls on rebecka her friend, who is also a lawyer but not a criminal one

she has no wish to return as it as the town has bad memories for her and she is not close to sanna who is not right mentally and also has 2 daughters

she is not especially welcomed into the close knit community, especially when she starts digging. the church seems to rule, the police have in-fighting to contend with and friends and family are not all they seem

can she survive and clear sanna although she has doubts of her own

a well told novel with great characterisation and obviously u have to concentrate as there r the foreign names to remember

just surprised that the police did not look into the finances of the church. also a bottle of wine, full or empty, would surely shatter when used as a weapon?

bev

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### **Joyce Lagow says**

A charismatic religious leader is found brutally murdered and mutilated inside the modern church of a thriving fundamentalist congregation in a town in northern Sweden. The sister of the murdered man calls her former close friend, Rebecka Martinsson, in Stockholm, pleading for help. Reluctantly, Rebecka takes time off from the law firm for which she works to head north, just for a few days, to help out her distraught friend. Unwittingly she is drawn into the investigation for the killer.[return][return]The ambience of the story--northern Sweden in winter--is very well done, but that's about the extent of what I found good about the book. The plot--involving fundamentalist fanatics, is adequate but the resolution is hardly believable. The writing does not help, consisting as it does of flat, declarative statements for the most part. The characters are stick figures and basically uninteresting. And to top it all off, there is a gratuitous animal killing that does nothing for the plot except add to the horror; I am rather tired of authors who seem to know no other way for upping tension besides animal torture and/or murder. The good ones know how to do it without using that

device.[return][return]This is the first of a series that I intend to avoid.

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## **Morana Mazor says**

Iako se danas mnogi romani nazivaju "psihološkim trilerima", Sun?eva oluja je upravo jedan takav roman u punom smislu zna?enja tog naziva.

Radnja se, naravno, vrti oko istrage umorstva, ali je veliki dio pri?e posve?en psihološkoj karakterizaciji likova.

Ali, da prvo kažemo nekoliko rije?i o zbiranjima u knjizi.

Odvjetnica Rebecka Martinson koja živi i radi u Stockholm, na poziv svoje prijateljice iz djetinjstva, Sanne Strangarda, vra?a se u Kirunu, mjesto na sjeveru Švedske u kojem je odrasla, a gdje je okrutno ubijen Sannin brat Viktor, karizmati?ni, vjerski vo?a, poznatiji kao "Dje?ak iz raja".

Rebecka, iako nerado, vra?a se u svoj rodni grad kako bi pomogla Sanni koja je, u me?uvremenu, optužena za bratovo ubojstvo.

U Kiruni susre?e i ostale osobe iz svoje prošlosti, te se, povremeno podsje?a na doga?aje koji su doveli do njezinog odlaska, a to nas interesira jednako kao i pitanje tko je ubojica jer je o?ito da se nešto ozbiljno odigralo u tim davnim danima me?u sudionicima današnje tragedije.

I tu dolazi do izražaja autori?ino odli?no psihološko opisivanje likova koji, svi do jednoga imaju nešto što ih vodi pa se tu izmjenjuju: pohlepa, korupcija, naivnost, religiozni zanos, slijepa poslušnost, mentalno oboljenje, osje?aj odgovornosti... Neki djeluju sami dok se neki udružuju zbog istog cilja.

Tako?er je odli?no opisano kako ljudi manipuliraju jedni drugima te kako sami sebi dopuštaju biti izmanipulirani.

Moram spomenuti i da su likovi su vrlo životni npr. inspektorica Anna- Marija Mella sudjeluje u istrazi u osmom mjesecu trudno?e i mu?e ju svi oni trudni?ki problemi sa kojima se žena susre?e tijekom tog perioda. I sama Rebeca nije, možda, tipi?na, dobra i požrtvovana, heroina koje naj?eš?e susre?emo; ona ima svoje frustracije, neki je ljudi nerviraju, ne libi se iznijeti svoje mišljenje i onda kada bi ga bilo bolje prešutjeti, svjesna je svojih pogrešaka i uvijek je spremna re?i nekome u lice ono što ga spada.

Posebnu snagu ovoj pri?i daju mjesto i vrijeme radnje, a to je Kiruna, gradi? na najsjevernijem djelu Švedske u doba najja?e zime koje su u ovom djelu zemlje najhladnije i najmra?nije. Zbog hladno?e i mraka koji su stalno prisutni pratitelji doga?anja imate osje?aj kao da se sve to odvija ne nekoj udaljenoj, ledenoj planeti. To je užasna hladno?a: ledeni zrak štipa i grize obaze, ako se diše kroz usta, boli u grlu i plu?ima, ako se diše kroz nos, nosne dla?ice lede se pri svakom udisaju; na pramenovima kose koji nisu ispod kape stvara se led pa zale?eni vrhovi zveckaju.

A tu je i, misti?na, Sun?eva oluja tj. polarna svjetlost koju susre?emo ve? na prvim stranicama kada ona prolaze?i po nebu, kroz krovni prozor crkve, "promatra" unakaženog Viktora Strangarda kojeg život napušta na podu ispred oltara.

Sun?eva oluja rijetka je pojava koja, po nekim vjerovanjima, upu?uje na katastrofu tako da je autorica odli?no ukomponirala i naslov romana, a i opis polarne svjetlosti ve? na samom po?etku, paralelno sa ubojstvom. Ali, ona je i dalje sveprisutna u romanu, taj sjaj na no?nom nebu, ta velika "plamena" zavjesa pod okriljem koje se odigravaju svi doga?aji i slomovi opisani u romanu.

"Sun?eva oluja" prvi je roman Ase Larsson napisan 2003 god. koji je odmah privukao ?itala?ku publiku duljem svijeta, a za koji je, te iste godine, dobila nagradu Akademije švedskih pisaca kriminalisti?kih romana za najbolju debitantsku knjigu. U Švedskoj je prema romanu snimljen i istoimeni film 2007 god.

Nakon Sun?eve oluje, Larsson je napisala još ?etiri romana u kojima je glavni lik Rebecka Martinson, od kojih su ?ak dva bila proglašena najboljim krimi romanom godine od strane Akademije švedskih pisaca, a ja se nadam da ?e neki od tih romana ?im prije biti objavljen i kod nas jer, nakon ovakvog prvijenca, možemo samo zamisliti što nam još Asa Larsson ima za ponuditi!

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### **Jeanette says**

Dark as the usual Scandinavian, but somehow this one has superior characterizations to more than equal the gritty. This new author is starting well with Sven-Erik, Rebecka, and Anna-Maria. Northern Sweden and the aurora borealis dance and flicker throughout. Yes, the characters are all considerably flawed and some not at all likeable. Not a cozy.

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### **Laura says**

I can't believe the high ratings. I am so disappointed by this. It's extremely bad written, and 80% of the book is just uninteresting. The ending was laughable at least. No one would believe that.

I absolutely hated all the characters with no exception. All of them were flat and unrealistic. And I dunno why they are swearing all the single time. I found them to be rude, unpolite, and disgusting.

Especially hated Rebecka and Sanna. Rebecka was extremely annoying as a main character. She doesn't have charisma or a good personality: she seems angry all the time and is pretty stupid and boring for being likeable.

Another thing that annoys me is that there is no investigation at all.

I don't care if the characters are playing with their dog one entire chapter or doing other boring actions that have no relation with the main mystery. So yeah, the whole book is all about random stuff the characters do, and at the very end, the "clever" Rebecka sees a connection and finds out who the murderer is. And with no investigation whatsoever. Like if someone would believe that.

I am done with this author.

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### **Laura says**

I've been on a Scandinavian writers' kick since I read and fell hard for 'Out Stealing Horses,' by Per Petterson last August. After reading all three of Petterson's books, (reviewing so far only the first,) I turned to the genre which Nordic writers seem to dominate these days---the suspense novel. A recent trip to Iceland prompted me to pick up first 'Voices,' by Arnaldur Indridason, which I intend later to write about, but will just say for now that it is a subject on which I am emphatically tepid. Next, I turned to Stieg Larsson's 'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo,' which, with his 'Girl Who Played with Fire,' I praised highly here. Mari Jungstedts's three Anders Knutas thrillers came next---reviews to appear, but I've got to write them first, don't I?

I've just now finished Asa Larsson's 'The Sun Storm,' and felt it was just too good to push aside to write about at some later, maybe neverish, time.

Of course, YOU don't want to read about someone who's had his eyes gouged out (and that was the least of his worries), nor do you want to read about a pack of crazed Swedish fundamentalist Christians, but don't let that stop you from picking up this book. It was not the dream of my lifetime to read about those things, either. But the novel opens with a stunning description of the aurora borealis and works its way past the blood and gore to characters and a plot that gain in strength and lucidity and momentum to the extent that I

couldn't put 'Sun Storm' down. This is Asa Larsson's first novel and it certainly isn't perfectly written. Its worst moments are better than many successful writers' best ones, though. If you want more info on the plot and things, you'll have to look elsewhere. I'll just say that in Rebecka Martinsson I found the best female protagonist I've encountered in a very long time. Larsson has a profound understanding of the human psyche and a powerful way of writing about it. It's not an easy book to read, but you've guessed that. Okay, but read it anyway. I've just ordered the sequel.

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### **Fred Shaw says**

Sun Storm by Asa Larsson, audiobook version.

A popular young priest is brutally murdered in his church in northern Sweden, and his sister who found the body is accused. Sanna Strandgord turns to her friend, attorney Rebecca Martinsson for help. Martinsson is a tax attorney and has no experience with high profile murder investigations. But Rebecca is smart and tough and goes to work.

To say this is a thriller would be putting it mildly. The characters are well developed and our heroine is admirable and will not be pushed around. The setting is Sweden in winter where there is bitter cold, constant snow and the aurora borealis is highly visible. Another key character is the church itself where Victor Strandgord was murdered. The other priests have built quite a business around the church and use "God's Word" to justify graft, tax evasion and even murder.

I have enjoyed a number of Swedish authors and Asa Larsson has put together a terrific first novel. Highly recommended

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### **Bettie? says**

[Bettie's Books (hide spoiler)]

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