



# The Ice Beneath Her

*Camilla Grebe*

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**NO ORDINARY PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER . . .**

For fans of Jo Nesbo and *The Bridge*, *The Ice Beneath Her* is a **gripping** and **deeply disturbing** story about **love, betrayal and obsession** that is **impossible to put down**. Fast-paced and peopled with compelling characters, it surprises at every turn as it hurtles towards **an unforgettable ending with a twist you really won't see coming . . .**

A young woman is found beheaded in an infamous business tycoon's marble-lined hallway.

The businessman, scandal-ridden CEO of the retail chain Clothes & More, is missing without a trace.

But who is the dead woman? And who is the brutal killer who wielded the machete?

Rewind two months earlier to meet Emma Bohman, a sales assistant for Clothes & More, whose life is turned upside down by a chance encounter with Jesper Orre. Insisting that their love affair is kept secret, he shakes Emma's world a second time when he suddenly leaves her with no explanation.

As frightening things begin to happen to Emma, she suspects Jesper is responsible. But why does he want to hurt her? And how far would he go to silence his secret lover?

## The Ice Beneath Her Details

Date : Published September 8th 2016 by Zaffre (first published August 20th 2015)

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Author : Camilla Grebe

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Genre : Mystery, Thriller, Fiction, Crime, Mystery Thriller, European Literature, Scandinavian Literature, Suspense, Psychological Thriller

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# From Reader Review The Ice Beneath Her for online ebook

## Diane S ? says

A body is found in the residence of a controversial CEO Jesper, headless, staged and Peter and his crew are brought in. The woman is unidentified but there are similarities to a murder of a man from ten years past that had never been solved. They bring in Hanne, who had worked with them on the previous case, somewhat of a profiler, but she is dealing with a silent enemy of her own.

Narrated by three different characters, Peter, Hanne and a young woman who had a relationship with Jesper, we travel inside the minds of these three people. A police procedural as well as a character study, this is an interesting and very well written look at how the case is solved as well as the personal lives and connections of these characters.

Grebe's first solo novel is well done, a solid and well thought out read.

ARC from Netgalley.

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## Melissa says

I'm not even sure I can pinpoint exactly what it is, but *something* about this clever and well-crafted tale felt completely different; like a breath of fresh Nordic air. Camilla Grebe will take you by the hand and lead you down a path that seems obvious, but be prepared, it's anything but. It's obsession at it's darkest.

Maybe it was the three very distinct perspectives, all told in first-person, which is a tad unusual, that sparked the feeling of this being different somehow. I have a hard time even deciding which perspective was my favorite because each character was delivered with such depth and a unique mindset.

Peter is one of the investigators called on to unravel the mystery behind a woman found beheaded in the home of a well-known and kind of shady CEO, Jesper Orre. For once, a detective was created that wasn't a raging alcoholic! That's a win for this genre, in my book. Granted he was still completely messed up and stuck inside of his own head. Unable to commit to anyone or anything other than his job, he leads sort of a miserable existence. But oddly enough, there was still something likable about him. I found myself rooting for him to do something with his life - to take a risk and put himself out there.

In steps Hanne, a former criminal profiler asked to assist on the murder case, and boy do her and Peter have a history. A sordid and honestly, kind of heartbreaking past. She's struggling with early onset dementia and the reality of how awful it would be to spend her remaining time wallowing in the unhappiness of her own marriage. There was something exciting about watching her make that leap and go after what she's always wanted.

And last, but certainly not least, enigmatic Emma. Her whole life she's been told there was something different about her, that she was odd. Until she meets her fiancé, that shady CEO, who claims to be a kindred spirit; someone completely misunderstood like her. She's willing to do anything for him, even hide their relationship. So the million dollar question becomes - why propose, abandon and ultimately decapitate her?

I think we all know, for any crime novel to be considered great, it has to have a stellar twist. Don't worry, this one delivers - big time. **Seriously, is there anything better than the elusive twist - the one I somehow missed among all of the scattered pieces of this puzzle?** The ending is the perfect fit for this cunning and wholly enjoyable read.

*\*THANK YOU to Random House/Ballantine Books and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Abby (Crime by the Book) says**

This. Book. Is. Amazing!!!!

Scandinavian crime fiction at its best. Vivid atmosphere, rich character development, and whip-smart plotting. I absolutely loved this book and simply could NOT put it down.

This story alternates between 3 narrators, and I loved the way Camilla Grebe draws you slowly but surely toward the heart of the story through the unique perspective of the 3 narrators. This is much more character-driven, less procedural-heavy than other Scandinavian authors, and Grebe has clearly found her voice within the many talented crime authors hailing from Scandinavia. She is a standout author, and *THE ICE BENEATH HER* is a standout crime novel. Highly, highly recommend.

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### **Brenda says**

This was an engaging book, but in the first few introductory chapters, everything felt so depressing.

Three main characters are telling their stories. Peter Lindgren is a homicide detective. He has issues with an ex-girlfriend who is the mother of his son with whom he has no relationship. Hanne Lagerlind-Schön is a criminal profiler. She is bored with her marriage and wants out, and she has a history with Peter. Emma Bohman works in a retail clothing store. Her childhood was not idyllic, but she's fallen in love and is engaged to be married. The crime victim is found in the home of Jesper Orre, who is Emma's boss, future husband, and missing.

The further I read into the book, the more questions I had. The characters (and my questions) were developed through the use of the characters' memories: of their childhoods, their parents, their loves, their betrayals. Ever so slowly, as the investigation proceeds in the present, things became clearer and answers were given. I correctly suspected how the book was going to end, and thus there were no surprises, but the book held my attention and I enjoyed it.

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### **Susan says**

I am a great lover of Nordic Noir and, having never read anything by Camilla Grebe before, was keen to try this out. She has co-authored earlier books, but this is her debut thriller solely written by herself and, in many ways, is typical of the genre. Set largely in Stockholm, this is a dark and unsettling novel, narrated by three main characters. There is Detective Inspector Peter Lindgren, Hanne, a police consultant who has early onset

Alzheimer's and a young shop worker called Emma Bohman.

When he is called to the house of wealthy businessman, Jesper Orre, Peter Lindgren finds the CEO missing and a woman beheaded in his hallway. The crime reminds him, and his partner Manfred Olsson, of a similar murder some years before. As Hanne was involved with that case, she is invited back to offer her advice; even though her and Peter had previously been involved with each other and their relationship had not ended happily. Meanwhile, Emma also narrates her story and tells of her relationship with Jesper Orre.

It is fair to say that at least one of the main characters is an unreliable narrator and that, as is so often the case in Nordic Noir crime fiction, many of the characters have personal issues. What unfolds is a tangled tale of romantic love, jealousy, betrayal and secrets. As a crime novel it is fairly dark and violent, but I enjoyed the different viewpoints and especially liked the parts from the points of view of Hanne and Emma. It was not quite a five star read for me, but I would certainly try more by this author and, if you do like your crime cold, dark and dangerous, then you will probably like this too.

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### **Petra says**

A young woman is found beheaded in the house of a controversial CEO of a clothing chain. The identity of the woman is unknown. The businessman, Jesper Orre, has simply vanished.

The story is told from three first-person perspectives:

The investigating DI, Peter Lindgren, a disillusioned and despondent man about to hit the big 5-0 whose only true commitment has always been his job.

A former profiler, Hanne, who is asked back to assist with the investigation when similarities to a crime from a decade ago are found. Hanne has been diagnosed with early-onset dementia and is trapped in a loveless marriage to a controlling man.

Then there's Emma's perspective which unlike the other two starts in the past and recounts her relationship with her fiancé, Jesper Orre. A relationship they are having to keep secret because he is her employer.

My experience with Scandinavian crime fiction has always been hit-and-miss. This one had the typical cold and bleak atmosphere and the detailed police procedural, but the alternating perspectives and the intricate insight into the past and present lives of these three intriguing and well-developed characters made this one into a definite hit. I particularly enjoyed Emma's and Hanne's perspectives. Overall, a fascinating character study, which was fast-paced and held my attention throughout. The solution to the crime becomes apparent about halfway through the novel, but it didn't lessen my enjoyment of the story at all. A very well-written debut by Swedish author Camilla Grebe, which I highly recommend if you enjoy dark Nordic character-driven fiction.

I received an ARC via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Susanne Strong says**

A Dynamic Thriller!

The Ice Beneath Her by Camilla Grebe is a Psychological Thriller about a mystery woman who is found

murdered in the most brutal of ways, in the home, Jesper Orre, the CEO of a very large company, who appears to be missing and is of course, the prime suspect.

The novel is told from three perspectives, Peter and Hanne (a detective and psychological profiler) who investigate the crime and share a past, and Emma, the fiancé of Jesper Orre. Emma's narration starts in the past and slowly moves forward, to present day, whereas both Peter's and Hanne's narrations starts in the present day.

The main characters are extremely well developed and well written. Hanne is kind, smart and wounded, in more ways than one, while Peter is a vapid character who has nothing to offer Hanne or anyone else. Emma, on the other hand, is a multi-faceted woman, who questioned everything and had me questioning everything.

I was on the edge of my seat trying to figure out who was murdered and enjoyed all of the twists and turns that Ms. Grebe threw the reader's way. I, for one, was not prepared for the ending and was completely shocked by it. I read the entire book in one sitting – it was a quick easy read and kept my attention all the way through.

I look forward to reading more from Ms. Grebe in the future!

Thank you to NetGalley, Bonnier Publishing – Zaffre, and Camilla Grebe for an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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\*\*Will be published on Amazon on 12/27/16.

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## **Linda Wells says**

"Winter's chill has descended on Stockholm as police arrive at the scene of a shocking murder. An unidentified woman lies beheaded in a posh suburban home-a brutal crime made all the more disturbing by its uncanny resemblance to an unsolved killing ten years earlier. But this time there's a suspect: the charismatic and controversial chain-store CEO Jesper Orre, who owns the home but is nowhere to be found."

The murders are gruesome in detail and often difficult to read. But the writing is engaging and intense. Each chapter is written from an alternating character's POV, an effective device that kept me uncertain almost until the end.

If you love psychological thrillers and don't mind graphic scenes of violence, you'll enjoy this amazing crime thriller. The characters are fascinating, perfectly developed, and several draw great sympathy even though flawed. I loved that element of the story; the relationships added a necessary quality, a warmth to this otherwise disturbing mystery. Certain scenes are especially touching and memorable. The ending was perfect, and your thoughts will linger as you read the last page.

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## Amalia Gavea says

*"It feels as if I'm falling into a deep black hole again. And outside, the rain keeps falling over Stockholm. Even the sky is crying."*

I've been eagerly waiting to read this debut novel by Camilla Grebe, and I can say that, as an avid reader of Nordic thrillers, I was not disappointed.

There are many distinct characteristics of the genre in this book. The different POVs, the bleak atmosphere, the dark, psychotic plot, all those elements that have brought the Scandi-Nordic thriller at the top of the literary world. Here, we have three narrators, Peter, Emma and Hanne. Peter is the police officer that takes over the case of a particularly gruesome murder, Hanne is a woman that aids the police with the profile of the murderer and the particulars of the crime (think "Criminal Minds") and Emma is a young woman with a troubled past and even worse present.

It is extremely difficult to write a review without spoilers, so I will not delve further into the plot. I will tell you, however, that the main emotion that this book gave me was anger. So much anger...Anger because Emma had to put up with so much shit from the very early stages of her life. Anger because there are- and will always be- bastards that take advantage of those who are carried away by their emotions, in spite of all the little voices that act as a warning.

Another thing that I really liked was the realistic plot. While in the majority of, say Lackberg's novels for example, the story is a bit too neat and the events a little too convenient, here the pieces of the puzzle fall into place in a better pace, in my opinion. I loved the fact that Grebe turns the beautiful city of Stockholm into a major character, bringing forth the dark, urban side of it. This adds dimension to the story, and enriches the atmosphere. The rainy autumn afternoons are certain to win you over.

The three characters that allow us into their lives and thoughts are interesting and well-written. Peter is interesting in the sense that he doesn't represent the typical, problematic police officer who's always fighting his demons. He seemed absolutely fine to me. Emma is the heart of the story, and Hanne is the figure of the tranquil power. Jesper is better left without comments and Emma's mother wins the trophy for best mum in Scandinavia...Except NOT! What I have to admit, though, is (view spoiler)

*The Ice Beneath Her* by Camilla Grebe is one more example of the mystery genre done right, and another addition to the never-ending list of fascinating Scandinavian thrillers. Keep them coming, Northern lands!

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## Krystin Rachel (Here's The Fucking Twist) says

My book ish: Blog | Insta

Holy Nordic crime fiction, Batman!

Ughhh, please just completely ignore that I started this book review with a *holy batman* exclamation.

If you're a fan of the aforementioned genre, you will love this novel. It's really hit or miss for me, but this one is a hit.

Let's start bookworm asses at the beginning, shall we?

A unidentified, decapitated woman is found in the bed of a moderately famous, very wealthy CEO. And he, Jesper Orre, has seemingly disappeared.

DI Peter Lindgren is lead detective on the case. He's a despondent, sullen character. He has an ex-wife who hates him and a troubled teenage son, whose issues could probably be traced back to his ongoing search for a connection with his father. Only time and again, he finds that Peter has been, and always will be, more interested in his job than his family.

Also lending us their insight is Hanne. She's a former criminal profiler who has had to leave her career behind once the effects of her early onset dementia left her unable to do her job to the best of her ability. She's stuck in a loveless marriage with a controlling man, and can't even trust her own mind. So, when she's asked to consult on the case of the headless woman, she says fuck it and finds her strength to make the leap into independence, despite her illness. Yas, girl! She was a total badass in a very classy, understated way. And I totally aspire to that. But for now I'm a messy contradiction swamp demon. But still...I'm *aspiring*.

Last is the perspective of the enigmatic Emma. Hers is the only POV which is told in the past, as she recounts her relationship with fiance Jasper Orre. A secret relationship, because he is her employer. Emma is sweet and naive, having gone through life being told that there is something odd about her, something different that has always made her feel alone. Until she meets Jasper and feels as though she's found a kindred spirit.

My overwhelming urge to scream RUN BITCH RUN at Emma stayed with me through most of the book and that's an interesting emotional level to maintain, I'll tell you that. Sweet, poor, stupid Emma. Pinning all her hopes and dreams on a man because he makes her feel like a person who finally belongs?

You do that for yourself. *You love yourself, you belong to yourself.*

But, I digress...because that's really the crux of the story: What is real love? What kind of love do we accept? When does love become obsession? When does obsession lead to betrayal? And when does betrayal lead to anger and revenge? It's deep, people! But I can't really talk about it anymore without giving plot elements away.

Ultimately, the character voices in this one were strong and vivid and unique. The mystery is the body of the plot, but these characters are the heart that keeps everything working. They illicit honest emotion from the reader, with depth and attention. It is a clean and tight example of "show, don't tell" writing, and expert pacing.

Is it a thrill ride? No. I won't lie. But it is thoughtful and poignant and emotionally addictive. The true definition of a page turner, action packed or not.



And let's talk about atmosphere just for a second, because this book is making it RAIN (no pun intended) with its cold and bleak autumn setting. I could feel it right through my leggings. Granted, leggings are pretty thin, but still.

This is a smart, well-plotted novel, that delivers a perfect ending of a plot-twist. I'm talking, like, a pick your jaw up off the floor, kick you in the crotch plot twist. Even for the most seasoned mystery fiction reader, the ending is evasive. Somehow you just keep missing what's sneaking up behind you. And honestly, is there anything better than reading a book like this and being completely fooled?

**“The detective story differs from every other story in this: that the reader is only happy if he feels a fool.” -GK Chesteron**

Get you kicks, bookworms! And if anyone can let me know what the title has to do with anything, that would be swell.

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**\*TANYA\* says**

4.25! The ending took me by surprise, I wasn't expecting it. Very good book, I almost want some of these characters to be part of a series.

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**Liz Barnsley says**

Really got hooked on “The Ice Beneath Her” – a clever and addictive psychological thriller with some great main characters (one of whom I disliked to the point of loving) and a lovely twisty turny whodunnit at the heart that will keep you on your reading toes.

I found it an interesting dynamic – a profiler with dementia and a detective with commitment issues, investigating the rather horrific death of a woman who can't be identified, seemingly by a man who is really not that nice of a guy – but seeing as how he has disappeared its all a little fraught. Cue a lot of shenanigans of the twisted kind and a set of intriguing character studies culminating in a fascinating solution.

I banged through this one, you always want to read just a little bit more – in the resolution stakes I did see the ending arriving about halfway through but in this case I would definitely say that is because the author does not in any way cheat the reader – if you absorb the story as it goes it becomes fairly apparent. It is no less enticing because of this though for reasons you'll see when you read it.

I thought the portions of the narrative that dealt with Hanne's ongoing dementia were sympathetic and realistic, she is an entirely engaging character who is very determined and seeing how she coped with things was really quite emotional at times. Emma is highly intriguing, a girl who is flummoxed by the actions of her lover, another clever play on human nature that is a vibe that runs throughout.

Overall really very good. Looking forward to more.

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## **Sue says**

THE ICE BENEATH HER By Camilla Grebe is a Swedish psychological thriller about a mystery woman who is found viciously murdered in the home of Jesper Orre, the CEO of a very large company. This is the author's debut as a solo author in this genre.

A young woman is found beheaded in an infamous business tycoon's marble-lined hallway.

The businessman, Jesper Orre, and suspect is missing without a trace.

Who is the dead woman? And who is the brutal killer who wielded the machete?

This is a riveting and alarming story about love, betrayal and obsession that I found impossible to put down. It is fast-paced with captivating well-developed characters with shocks and twists at every turn peaking with an end you won't see coming.

The novel is told from three perspectives, Peter, a shy detective, Hanne, a psychological profiler recently diagnosed with early onset dementia, and Emma, the fiancé of Jesper Orre. Jesper insists that their love affair be kept secret? Emma's account starts in the past and moves forward to present day, whereas both Peter's and Hanne's account start in the present.

Could this beheading murder be related to a similar event which the team worked on years earlier?

Then alarming things begin to happen to Emma, and she suspects Jesper is responsible. But why would he want to hurt her?

I kept trying to figure out who was murdered? I couldn't sleep last night, so I stayed up and read this novel in one sitting. I was shocked by the ending but it held my attention right to the end.

An enjoyable read!

Thank you to NetGalley, Bonnier Publishing – Zaffre, and Camilla Grebe for an ARC of this book.

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## **Laura/Mystery in Minutes says**

***The Ice Beneath Her is one of the best novels I have read within the past year.***

There are those books that very early on in your reading of them cause you to think, "unless something really changes, this is going to be a five - or "six" - star read for me. I was not even halfway done with The Ice Beneath Her when I knew I was reading something special.

The Ice Beneath Her satisfied so many of *my* crime fiction preferences.

***Most of the novel is a masterclass in "show, don't tell".***

I have rarely been so moved in a work of crime fiction by so many scenes of great emotional depth and poignancy; scenes that flow through the narrative naturally; scenes that the reader feels in their heart.

***The characters are deeply human, and are the meat of the work.***

We resent and detest some of the characters at times, as we are meant to, and at other times, we sympathize with vulnerabilities. Just like in real life, none of the characters are just one thing - all good or all bad. Bits and pieces of their layers are revealed to the reader throughout. Their histories and life experiences contribute to making them who they are. ***And discovering who the characters are, dear reader, in all of their unreliable complexity, is the delicious, mind-bending journey that this novel takes its readers on.***

While *The Ice Beneath Her* does have a gripping plot with unexpected twists and surprises, is it a 100 mile-per-hour roller coaster ride with shocks throughout? I would not say so, and if a reader approaches it with those expectations, it may not be the right book for them. If, however, a reader enjoys his or her crime fiction with a literary bent, this novel is tailor-made for them. It is moody, and atmospheric, and nuanced. The plotting of the story is excellent, and the mystery itself never failed to hold my interest, yet it unfolded like the metamorphosis of a butterfly, with its rich rewards.

*The Ice Beneath Her* has introduced me to a wonderful writer. It has also reintroduced me to a sub-genre of crime fiction hailing from the Nordic countries which has its own distinct flavor and perspective, and which I will absolutely be reading much more of in the future.

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## **Vivian says**

More about character discontent than a gruesome murder suspense.

The format and the structural decisions made in the storytelling did not work for me. First person point of view is powerful when used correctly. Unfortunately, here the rotating first person point-of-view between *multiple* characters was disorienting and felt like head-hopping; combined with the *multiple* memory flashbacks with no sections breaks or indications was baffling. I had repeated instances of needing to reread the beginning of a new section because it was presented as merely a successive paragraph belonging to now, when in reality I was thrust backwards in time. The pinball timeline jumping was horrible.

I was expecting more of a suspense, actively watching the case unfold, than a tangle of character angst and ennui. The decapitation was a good touch, but it felt glossed over and lacking the horror. It was more concerned with characters shoes getting mucky than chilled by the violence and dedication such an act requires. The lack of emotion seems to be key, and I'm not just talking about the reserved quality of Scandinavian cultural norms--it felt blah...

There are some amusing descriptives, but there is also a great deal of minutiae that just filled the pages and felt like flipping through a catalog instead of being immersed in the scenes. This kept me separated and fed my disinterest as it proceeded from one tale of a character's discontent to another. Eventually, I decided I really did not want to finish it because I didn't care what happened.

Overall, disappointing.

Apparently, Nordic Noir is becoming a thing for me. That, and the lure of decapitation, which unfortunately, did not live up to my hopes.

~~ARC provided by NetGalley~~

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