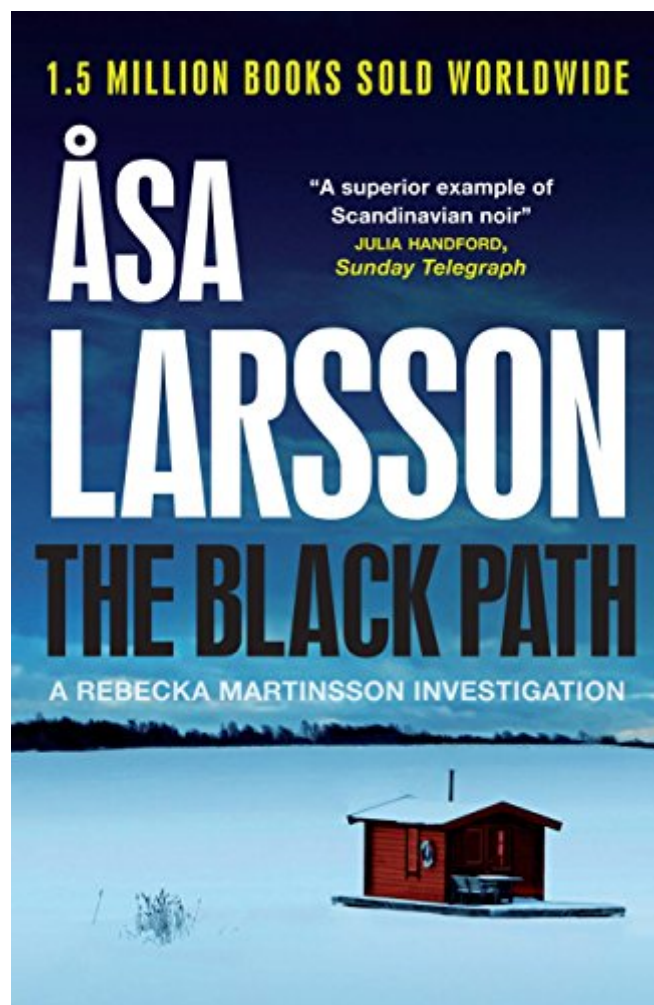


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The Black Path: A Rebecka Martinsson Investigation



Synopsis

A woman's body is found on a frozen lake, bearing the marks of grisly torture. Inspector Anna-Maria Mella knows she needs help with the case - the woman was a key player in a mining company whose tentacles reach across the globe. Lawyer Rebecka Martinsson is desperate to get back to work, to feel alive again after a case that almost destroyed her both physically and emotionally. Soon she is delving into the affairs of the victim's boss, the founder of Kallis Mining, whose relationship with the dead woman was complex and obsessive. Martinsson and Mella are about to uncover a dark and tangled drama of family secrets, twisted sexuality, and corruption on a massive scale. Set against a haunting, icy backdrop and packed with suspense, *The Black Path* is a menacing and evocative psychological crime novel.

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Customer Reviews

As a reader who has read all of Henning Mankell's Kurt Wallender mysteries, Karin Fossum's Conrad Sejer mysteries, Kjell Eriksson, Arnaldur Indridason, and Mari Jungstedt, and the best of the British, Peter Robinson, Reginald Hill, P.D. James, Ruth Rendell, etc., I have to say that the

discovery of the books of Asa Larsson are exceptional. The psychology, motivations, and plot devices are so riveting. I have read the first 3 books, in what I understand is to be a series of 6, and they are truly, "I can't put them down" reads. The darkness of the books is in keeping with the Scandinavian tradition, but there is so much more subtlety. The descriptions, the little surprises of language, and the occasional dark humor, are totally involving. I recommend reading the first, second, and third in order, if possible. 'The Black Path', the third of the septet, have left me eagerly awaiting the next three. The intelligence of writing is astonishing.

This is the third book in a series of novels set in northern Sweden. I originally found the first one, Sun Storm, while looking for foreign police procedurals, which I consume voraciously. However, I wouldn't really put these books into that genre -- which might be why some people gave them low ratings. Yes, there is a central mystery. Yes, there are police people searching out clues. Yes, there is CSI-like pathology stuff. But, by the third book, The Black Path, it is almost secondary. Asa Larsson and her interpreter have an AMAZING way with words! The images conjured up are amazing and breathtaking. And she builds incredibly rich characters that you watch grow and change and evolve throughout the story. And they are so unforgettable! Rebecka and Sivving and Nalle and Mans and Swen-Erik.... There is a distinct structure to the novels that I am really enjoying, but that is very different from other police procedurals (like those of Mankell) -- so be warned.

There is a lot mixed into this, 3rd in the series of Rebecka Martinsson stories: international intrigue, murder, love and betrayal, self-searching... Way too many things for one murder mystery. Moreover, a lot of the elements of the story don't really contribute to the plot -- too many details for the sake of details. I was really disappointed by the book. Rebecka Martinsson has a very small role to play in this book, and it has hardly anything to do with the investigation. In fact, there is not much of an investigation either. This book is not a total waste of time if you have to kill time on a plane or at an airport but if you are looking for an enjoyable murder mystery, don't waste your time.

The latest instalment in Asa Larsson's 'Rebecka Martinsson' series and to my mind, her best to date. Rebecka has seemingly made a full recovery from the horrific attack of the previous book and after her release from the psychiatric unit, finds herself embroiled in another murder investigation with the wonderful female detective Anna-Maria Mella. This is where Larsson excels in her characterisation that portrays Rebecka as an outwardly strong but essentially damaged woman and Anna-Maria, who witnesses so much horror in her day job, as an incredibly grounded and centred

character, and who acts as a perfect foil to Rebecka's polar opposite characteristics. The interplay and deep-seated respect and affection between them is even more prevalent in this plot as they work together to uncover some insidious goings on within an extremely influential yet corrupt mining corporation that leads to greed and murder. I think this book is the closest in context that I've read to say 'The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo' or 'The Killing' where the more socio-political plot is given centre stage and I did find the detail regarding the corruption of big business in Third World countries extremely interesting. Obviously this was running parallel with the murder investigation and the strange trinity of the murdered woman, her brother and his friend- the figures at the forefront of the mining corporation- and their interaction and relationships with each other which was equally compelling. An accomplished and highly readable thriller from Larsson who just gets better with every book...

Asa Larsson knows how to get her readers sucked into a book. I picked this one up and had trouble putting it down until I was finished. This thriller takes place in Sweden. A woman is found murdered in a lake house and it appears that she was tortured by electrocution and stabbed multiple times. Her name is Ina Wattring and she is the public relations officer for Kallis Mines, a multi-national mining company with ties to mines in conflict-laden African nations. Ina and her brother Didi both work for Mauri Kallis, the mine's owner. They all met while college students and this book goes back and forth in time, providing the reader with information about what is happening currently along with the back story of the protagonists. The investigators for this crime are Inspectors Anna-Maria Mella and Sven-Erik Stalnacko. They are joined by Rebecka Martinson, an attorney who has recently recovered from a terrible psychiatric breakdown which sounds like post-traumatic stress disorder. She was hospitalized for some time and this is her first case since being discharged. The investigation of the case is very interesting and it goes into the workings of the mine and the people who run it. I especially enjoyed the back stories of the characters which help to flesh them out. Interestingly, the people who are least fleshed out are the investigators. I was disappointed with the ending as it seemed to come out of nowhere like a deus ex machina. However, the reading experience was great and I hope to read more books by this author.

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