



## The Darkest Room

*Johan Theorin*

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*'The dead are our neighbours everywhere on the island, and you have to get used to it.'*

It is bitter mid-winter on the Swedish island of Oland, and Katrine and Joakim Westin have moved with their children to the boarded-up manor house at Eel Point. But their remote idyll is soon shattered when Katrine is found drowned off the rocks nearby. As Joakim struggles to keep his sanity in the wake of the tragedy, the old house begins to exert a strange hold over him.

Joakim has never been in the least superstitious, but from where are those whispering noises coming? To whom does his daughter call out in the night? And why is the barn door for ever ajar?

As the end of the year approaches, and the infamous winter storm moves in across Oland, Joakim begins to fear that the most spine-chilling story he's heard about Eel Point might indeed be true: that every Christmas the dead return...

## The Darkest Room Details

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Author : Johan Theorin

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# From Reader Review The Darkest Room for online ebook

## cassidy 1981 says

Kone?ne kniha, o ktorej som rozmýš?ala, aj ke? som ju práve ne?ítala ?. Skvelá ???

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## Peter Taylor says

I liked this book and would give it 4 stars. Personally I think the blurb on the cover is an exaggeration and does not do the story justice. It is not a frightening horror/crime story. It is an eerie believable ghost story about a house that was built from wood salvaged from a vessel wrecked of the Island in 1846. However this is no Hollywood type of sinister monster house.

It is the story of how Joakim and his children cope with the death of his sister and wife. Intertwined with details of the tragic deaths of men, women and children associated with the house. The house is like a church with a graveyard without the corpses and you can imagine the ghosts meeting each year on Christmas Eve in silent remembrance.

It is also a story about this Island and the terrifying Blizzards that occur. Snow mixed with sand driven by the wind from the baltic, so harsh that it can damage the eyes

I also liked the imagery -  
"waves like slow breathes in the darkness" - describing the sea  
"pale half moon behind a film of cloud as fine as silk"

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## Thomas Strömquist says

The first book in "The Öland Quartet", Skumtimmen ("Echoes from the Dead") was a pre-Goodreads read for me, so a few years ago. I enjoyed it very much and certainly enough to collect more books by Theorin, including two of the other three in this quartet. For some reason though, I haven't gotten around to reading any of the others until now - but I'm certainly going to redeem that mistake.

Nattfåk ("Natt" meaning night-time and "Fåk" being the Öland name for an especially nasty snow/sleet/ice storm that some years plague the island) really blew me away - I talked about it so much that I had to lend it to a co-worker the minute I was done with it.

Following a death in the family Katrine and Joakim Westin, with their two children, move from a Stockholm suburb to a remote area of the Baltic island Öland, taking up residence in an uncharacteristically large lighthouse keeper's house. The back story is that during construction of the twin lighthouses, a large boat carrying timber shipwrecked nearby, leaving no survivors. Making use of the timber (on the island where it's not abundant), the house was constructed.

Katrine has family ties to the island and some, foremost her mother's, history are told in between chapters, giving both richness and depth to the story evolving.

The rest of the cast is a young police woman (she's also the niece of Gerlof - one recurring character), opening up the - for some time unmanned - police station in the area; and a small band of burglars, plundering the summer residences.

A second tragic event in the Westin family starts a chain of events that leaves Joakim doubting his sanity and later his reality and the house affects him - surely the ghost stories can't be true? And how is the death of his sister tied to Öland at all?

As the "Fåk" draws near, the parts start to come together - as are the contenders - for a final culmination.

Part crime mystery, part ghost(ly) story - expertly told and just on the right side of believable without being predicable. And with an exemplary tight but suspenseful ending. What's not to love? Oh, and the parts are stand alone stories and need not be read in order as far as I can tell.

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### **Maria says**

Ωρα?ο βιβλ?ο με ωρα?α πλοκ?. Αλλ? κ?που με απογο?τευσε. Δεν ?ταν η ιστορ?α που ν?μιζα πως θα διαβ?σω, αυτ? που περ?μενα. ?ταν η εξιχν?αση κ?ποιων φ?νων και κυρ?ως η συναισθηματικ? και ψυχολογικ? κατ?πτωση εν?ς ?ντρα και το βαρ? του π?νθος. Β?βαια υπ?ρχε μια απειλ? στην ιστορ?α που ?σο το δι?βαζα μεγ?λωνε αλλ? ως εκε?. Εγ? ?θελα φαντ?σματα!! πολλ? φαντ?σματα!!

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### **Cœur De Pirate says**

Ατμοσφαιρικ?, αρκετ? σκοτειν? (?πρεπε να δικαιολογηθε? και ο τ?τλος) και αν μη τι ?λλο ανατρεπτικ? ως προς την εξ?λιξη. Αφ?νει π?ντως αρκετ? αναπ?ντητα ερωτ?ματα, δεν ξ?ρω αν υπ?ρχει συν?χεια της ιστορ?ας σε ?λλο βιβλ?ο.

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### **Booklunatic says**

4,5 Sterne

Das war schön schaurig - ideal für düstere November-Abende. Im letzten Drittel konnte ich gar nicht mehr aufhören zu lesen.

Ich suche übrigens dringend nach mehr Autoren wie Theorin oder Yrsa Sigurdardottir, vorzugsweise ebenfalls skandinavisch, die Krimis mit übersinnlich-grusligem Einschlag schreiben. Wenn da also noch jemand Empfehlungen für mich hat?!

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## Franco Santos says

**Muy buen libro secuela de El Cuarteto de Öland.** Me gustó mucho. Un ingrediente que me cautivó es la estación en la que tiene lugar esta historia: el invierno. Adoro el frío desolador y seco, **una contingencia más en una trama llena de secretos, misterios y leyendas.**

Amé el final; no me lo vi venir de ninguna manera. **Es un gran plot-twist que me sorprendió como pocos libros lo hicieron.**

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## Lynn says

Atmospheric and menacing winter on Öland in the Baltic Sea. A young couple with children buy and begin to restore an isolated timber manor house in the shadow of two lighthouses. The bleak history of the area blends well with the unlucky inhabitants of past and present. I was looking for ghosts and death in the grand finale blizzard. Gerlof, the octogenarian hero of Echoes from the Dead, has an important role here as well. I hope to find him again in the remaining books of the quartet.

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## Mohikanos says

Για άλλη μια φορά μου ρεσε πολύ η γραφή του Theorin. Γράφει ωραία, μεστή, έχουν δομή οι ιστορίες του, ολοκληρωμένους χαρακτήρες, πλούσιες περιγραφές τοπών και μια μελωδικότητα που τον ξεχωρίζει από τους άλλους συγγραφείς αστυνομικών μυθιστορημάτων. Μσα σε όλα αυτά θα προσθέτα και μια νέα μελαγχολία που πηγάζει από τις ιστορίες του, τόσο εξαιτίας των καταστάσεων που αντιμετωπίζουν οι ήρωές του, όσο και λόγω του τοπικού το οποίο ενδεκνυται για ψυχοπλακωτικές περιγραφές.

Σε αυτό το βιβλίο, όμως, πει να κάνει μια ενδιαφέρουσα ανατροπή σε σχέση με το προηγούμενο: προσπαθεί να ενσωματώσει στοιχεία μεταφυσικού, κινώντας την ιστορία πιο σκοτεινά και ζοφερή. Στα πρώτα κεφάλαια, μάλιστα, υπάρχουν σκηνές που πραγματικά σου δημιουργούν ένταση και κλειστοφοβική αίσθηση. Εντότοις, αυτό η προσπάθει του καταλήγει - εξαιτίας του ίδιου - στο κενό: γιατί από να σημείο και μετά μοιζει τι διχάζεται στο ποιόν δρόμο να ακολουθήσει, αυτόν του μεταφυσικού ή του αστυνομικού - και καταλήγει, προς λάπη μου, στο δεύτερο. Τσι, όλη η μάχη που δημιουργεί στα πρώτα κεφάλαια σβνεται σιγά-σιγά με την εξέλιξη της ιστορίας μέχρι την τελική κατάληξη της, που είναι απολύτως ανθρώπινη (αν και εξαιρετικά δυνατά και έντονη). Όχι τι η ιστορία παίζει κπου ή τι έχει κάποιο ψεδιδι! όμως, ταν σου έχει δημιουργήσει κποιες προσδοκίες και τελικά στις αφνει ανεκπλρωτες, σγουρα επηρεζει την προδιθεσή σου προς το βιβλίο.

Επανερχόμενος στην εισαγωγή μου, το βιβλίο είναι πολύ καλό και ο συγγραφέας έχει πολλή να μας δώσει αν συνεχίσει σε αυτό το μοτβο και εξελιχθε περισστέρο. Διαβστε το χωρς δεύτερη σκψη. Αλλά μην περιμνετε μεταφυσικ τρμό...(8/10)

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## Nancy Oakes says

Joakim and Katrine Westin, along with their two small children, have decided to leave Stockholm to buy and

renovate an old manor house at Eel Point on the island of Öland. Along with its two lighthouses, this area has a long history of shipwrecks and drownings, and it is said that the voices of the dead can still be heard. But for Joakim and Katrine, Eel Point offers a new beginning. For their children there are meadows and forests to play in, a definite change from urban life in Stockholm. But after only a couple of months, the idyllic setting becomes a place of dread after a terrible tragedy, which leaves Joakim shaken and inconsolable, unable to deal with his grief. He begins to become more interested in Eel Point's haunted history, wondering indeed if the dead inhabit the area, and the house begins to act on his damaged soul. He meets Tilda Davidsson, a newly-recruited police officer who has moved to the area to escape from the gossip involved with her affair with a married policeman, and because she has family there. Tilda's great-uncle is Gerlof Davidsson, who was a major character in Theorin's first novel, *Echoes From the Dead*, and she spends a lot of time with him, putting his memories of his life on Öland down on tape.

But there's more. As the Westin family is coping with its grief, the two Serelius brothers and their cohort in crime Henrik Jansson are busy breaking into vacation homes where the owners are away, stealing valuables and causing general mayhem. It's not long until their forays escalate and they start breaking into occupied houses and becoming violent, hopped up on meth before each job. Their activities have been reported to the police, but it isn't until Gerlof suggests to Tilda that she talk to a few of his old friends that anything really happens with the case.

These two plotlines, along with Gerlof's oral history of his family and of life on Öland, also combined with excerpts from a book written by Katrine's mother Mirja Rambe, all weave together into a perfectly-crafted thriller with a slight hint of gothic thrown into the mix. The sense of place is unbelievably eerie and helps to keep the tension and suspense from ebbing at any point in the story. The characters are meticulously and well constructed, especially in the cases of Katrine and Joakim, whose lives Theorin discloses in only small bits and pieces at a time. The pacing of the novel is just a little slow to begin with, but when it picks up, there is no way anyone can possibly put this book down until it's over.

I have to admit to being put off at first by the hint of the supernatural that figures into the story, but as all came to be revealed, my worries were put to rest and Theorin didn't let me down. It is tough to label *The Darkest Room* as simply a mystery or a novel of crime fiction, because it's also an examination of loss, grief and human nature in its most vulnerable and exposed state. And as in his earlier *Echoes of the Dead*, Theorin has created a story in which the past has meaning for and acts on the present -- one of my favorite types of novels. I highly recommend this one and considering I read it in 90+ degree heat with a near equal level of humidity, it made me shiver throughout. *The Darkest Room* is simply stellar.

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### Chrissa Vasileiou says

4 αστερ?κια,αν και ψιλοαπογοητε?τηκα,μιας και ο?τε κατ? δι?νοια δεν ?ταν τ?σο τρομακτικ? το βιβλ?ο,?σο υπονοο?σαν ο τ?τλος και η περι?ληψ? του..Ατμοσφαιρικ?...μμμ ναι OK,και π?λι ?μωσ σε μερικ? σημει?α μ?νο..Σε ?,τι αφορ? το υπερφυσικ?,γιατ? στο περιγραφικ? κομμ?τι του ναι,?ταν!

Θεωρ? πως περισσ?τερο αυτ? το βιβλ?ο το σ?ζει το νησ? ?λαντ,?που διαδραματ?ζεται το στ?ρυ,και η ?δια η Σουηδ?α με το χειμ?να της.Τρομερ? βο?θεια το περιβ?λλον στον αναμφισβ?τητα ταλαντο?χο συγγραφ?α,που καταφ?ρνει να πλ?σει ?να ιδια?τερο background για το στ?ρυ του(και ατμοσφαιρικ?,?πως ε?παμε και παραπ?νω).Αν η υπ?θεση εκτυλισσ?ταν κ?που αλλο?,σ?γουρα θα ?χανε αρκετ?..

Την ιστορ?α την περ?μενα λ?γο πιο δυνατ?,για να ε?μαι ειλικριν?ς.Οικογ?νεια μετακομ?ζει στην

επαρχία,μητέρα πνέγεται ξαφνικά,πατέρας μνεί πως χοντάς να αντιμετωπίσει το πνέθος του,την ανατροφή των παιδιών,τα συναισθήματά του και κάποια φαντάσματα που ζουν στον αχούρνα του.Μάλλον δε ζουν,αλλά εμφανίζονται κάθε τόσο,ιδίως τα Χριστούγεννα.Πολλές αναγνωστικές προσδοκίες,λήγη συγκριτική ικανοποίηση.Ελάχιστες οι σελίδες με αναφορά στο υπερφυσικό,αρκετά δυνατά η μάχη και μοναδική σκηνή συνάντησής του με τα προαναφερθέντα φαντάσματα στον αχούρνα,αλλά όχι αυτή που θα περιέμενε ένας φανταστικός ιστορικός με βάση τα όσα είχε διαβάσει για το βιβλίο,πριν διαβάσει το ίδιο το βιβλίο.Όχι τόσο δυνατά ώστε να σε κάνει να ανατριχίσεις,αρχικά απ'όστικτο με όσα διαβάζεις και στη συνέχεια απ'ικανοποίηση.

Δε θάλω σε κάμωα περίπτωση να πω πως δεν ήταν καλή ή πως με απογοήτευσε.Απλά ήταν επιλογές να βιβλίο για κάποιο λόγο(στην προκειμένη,για να διαβάσεις για φαντάσματα)και τελικά διαβάζεις για 100 πράγματα,απ'όποια τα 10 μόνο αντιστοιχούν σε φαντάσματα,εκπώς τόσο λήγος,απογοητεύσαι.Είναι σα να σπρχνουν συνέχεια προς το μέρος σου το κουτί με τη Μερντά,αλλά πνέτα την τελευταία στιγμή στο πάρνουν πως!Το βιβλίο αυτό είναι ωραίο,τατο,το συστνώ ανεπιφύλακτα,αλλά μην περιμένετε οι φαν του τρέμου να ικανοποιηθείτε τόσο πολύ..Παίζει εντονότατα το αστυνομικό στοιχείο.Αρμονικό πλεγμασμός του,αλλά όπωςδποτε όχι η ατμόσφαιρα που θα περιέμενε κανείς απ'όνα βιβλίο που πλασαρζεται ως τρέμου. Απ'την άλλη,ο τρέμος έχει πολλή επ'πεδα και πολλοί σως προτιμούν την ανεπαίσθητη χροιά του τρέμου,τον "ρέμο",τον "τέρα το νιθω το τσμπημα αλλά μέχρι εκεί.." ΟΚ,τέτε ειδικά θα το λατρεύετε..άλλωστε,περ'ορξέως,ξέρετε τι λένε.. ;)

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## Graham says

Theorin has captured the bleak and frozen winters of Olan, an island off the coast of Sweden, not only in his descriptions, which blend seamlessly into the story, but also in the content of the narrative. The darkness and oppressiveness of the plot are enhanced by his descriptions of the setting. Add to this his skill at weaving a plot that defies prediction, as well as multiple clever twists, and you have a highly entertaining novel which has you gasping and even laughing at his writing skill. Looking for riveting reading? Read Theorin. A mystery, thriller, family saga and testimonial to an otherwise unknown part of the world. Can't wait to read book 3 and 4 of his Oland quartet. I hope they are available in the English translation. Otherwise I may have to learn Swedish, German or Spanish.

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## Nikoleta says

Δεν είμαι γνώστης του συγκεκριμένου έδους λογοτεχνίας αλλά "Το πιο σκοτεινό δωμάτιο" μου έρεσε πάρα πολύ. Γκρίζα ατμόσφαιρα σε σκοτεινό απ'μερο τοπείο, με ψηλά κύματα, χιόνι και να πολύ παλιό στοιχειώμενο αρχοντικό! Υπ'ροχο δόσιμο του μεταφυσικού στοιχείου με το αστυνομικό. Και φυσικά εκπληκτική η αφήγηση για όλα τα στάδια της θλύψης και του θρόνου του ρωα, δεν ήταν δυνατόν να μην συμπέσεις ακμάς ήταν το μυαλό του τα χάνει.

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## Tim Pendry says

A nordic noir thriller with an occult twist. The standard issue mildly troubled female police officer, the forbidding climate, small town relationships, dour males, family dysfunctionality, a hint of folk religion, it is all there but, this time, ghosts appear and are accepted as real.

It passes the time but it is not particularly memorable. There is some solid writing but the plot is far-fetched, people all arrive in the same place coincidentally, the evidential base for the final accusation is weak and some things are not explained that should be explained.

This is a shame because Theorin is actually quite good at characterisation and atmosphere but is this supposed to be a crime thriller? ... or is it supposed to be a ghost story? ... or is it supposed to be 'art'? In the end, it falls between all these stools.

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### Clumsy Storyteller says

**"The dead came up out of the bog.. lots of them, clawing at me, ripping and tearing... they were cold, so cold. They wanted my warmth."**

This book turned out better than i expected. I was about to DNF it because of the slow as hell start but i continued reading it. And it was totally worth it. It's written in third person. It follows three characters: Henrik jansson (the thief), Tilda davidsson: a police officer, Joakim westin a father of a family. The westin family moved into this big haunted house, and then strange things start to happen. Also the book contains «notes or passages from katrine's mother (Mirja Rambe) diaries».

i went into this thinking it's paranormal/mystery murder. But it wasn't heavy on the Paranormal stuff. it focused on the burglars, and the everyday life of Joakim and Tilda, and some ghost stories from Gerlof. We start seeing some actions and paranormal activities about 350 pages into this book.

The ending was so terrifying, i got a bit anxious, I realised I was holding my breath with anticipation.

i highly recommened.

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