

Introduction of Karin Slaughter

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How to introduce a person who has already littered the world, no, I mean embedded herself with the sale of about 30 million, give or take a few, of her books in the minds of her readers, with plots that thicken, as is their nature, and characters that hook you into the next book.

We know about her Georgian roots and we know about the segregation, the bible belt, God's own country bumper stickers and the law that for most people in the mountains, by the way in most parts of the world still, is in their own hands or else ...just a state or a country away.

But we also know of those mountains, the Appalachian, as a platform of music, of sentiment, somewhat Irish in sound, laced with the misery and joy of indeed living your own hard fought land. And I am not just talking about The Deliverance and those duelling banjo's.

How to interview Karin Slaughter, which I am expected to do tonight. The woman, who, with that name was meant to live up to her name or to live up to her name. Think serial or not serial.

I understand from the material with which I prepared for this evening, that Mrs. Slaughter's grandmother had a ghoulish interest in the other side of things mundane. Karin herself was apparently in her youth confronted with the case of unsolved child murders in the area and her father told her horror stories. One is the result of a whole history of genes, love and hate and in the end, you are what you make of it. And fortunately, Slaughter shares that result in her books.

Sometimes choices are indeed driven by the need to map the human mind, to give some meaning between the crowd and its victim. The need for a writer perhaps to describe anthropology connected with thrills. To keep you feel alive and wanting more.

What makes a woman or a man for that matter. One almost never knows. What makes a man put garbage bags in a woman's female parts, what makes men in some African countries today have women put a certain type of plant leaves in their body to tighten that part and as a side effect slowly have them die. Why rape a baby under the false supposition that it may cure HIV or at least not give you HIV. Why shoot your schoolmates dead. Pain people play. Humans as commodity.

What shall I interview Slaughter on. Try to dig myself into her drive to describe the underbelly of Atlanta, the dark side of the Appalachian, the ying and yang of human kind?

One could ask her if a book always mirrors the, perhaps somewhat warped, mind of the writer.

Is it even possible to step out of oneself. The fourth dimension in other words. The fantasy as the ultimate sublimation of the writer's deepest fears and wants.

Or can we say, that the better, the deeper the book draws you in, the apparent greater capacity for empathy of its writer. What triggers the writer in other words.

Why, oh why. Karin Slaughter? And how many times. And how does that feel. Was it as good for you as it was for your readers.

Because you.. audience, you know, you all want more.

Oh yes, by the way, Karin, if I may call you that, what will happen with Maggie's sister in Cop Town. Will she appear in the next book? Because something's wrong there. Deeply wrong. You don't need to answer that right now. We shall save this for later.

Admit, you all are hooked.

Karin Slaughter is here tonight to our delight in the course of the presentation of her latest thriller "Cop Town", AKA "Veroordeeld" in Dutch. So you don't grab the wrong movie.

The story weaves itself in dualistic sense between the rule of law and the revenge, perhaps much deserved, of the broken, the unseen, the posse of vigilantes.

Whilst reading the book, it resonated thoughts about the Don Wesley character, the issue of the fascination for weapons. The strange and unpractical sense of security they presume. Or about the difference between a cop and a gangster. Perhaps only the uniform, and of course being untouchable. And oh yeah, the law on your side. Whilst trampling on it.

Cop town, A thriller that has layers of humanity, as do most of Slaughter's books, far removed from the pulp that feature hard boiled Stetsons and dames. You know, the ones with the fur coats hanging off the shoulder and matching dangling cigarette, they always dangle for some reason, with silver holder and of course, those long legs .. up to here.

Cop town made me think, because of its level of human interest, that this book is also far removed from those books, that go indeed overboard with psychology as a tool to lead the reader through the story to the in that case much deserved and by then nauseating ending. An example of the other side of the spectrum. You know what I mean.

For instance: a description of a tormented main character, a torment which branches out into the deepest recesses of the minds of the most minute side figure like the doorman of the building owned by another boringly traumatised figure and his deviant family, who after a 100 pages apparently rents out an apartment in that building to the father of the bride, both of course with their unique psychological disorders, of the shell-shocked detective in whose cupboard the body was found..and then the cousin of that body....twice removed.... that's whose dog was shot! Go figure!

You know these kind of story's, alas, often depicted in movies, that make you question the one sitting next to you every 10 minutes about the logic and the characters and why this one seems to be the other one and wasn't he already dead.

What you get in Cop Town is the seventies in Atlanta. And not in the nostalgic sense, I would say. Unless you are a uniform fanatic and your best friend is a warm gun.

If the Netherlands of the seventies would have been the backdrop of the story, we would have been talking flared pants, platform shoes complimented with a smelly afghan coat. And a rather woodstocky flavour to the social position of the population. Location, location!

What you also get with Atlanta in the seventies is the right to beat up the suspect, the innocent bystander and the suspense circling in the life of Maggie Lawson and Kate Murphy, and as a side order: the inside of the lynchmob, the racist you love to hate.

Right,.. Slaughter. She delivers. She knows how to keep you glued to the pages, to dose the blood, to paint Maggie and Kate and all those around in Cop Town with deep strokes, to keep the heart pounding.

With this, I present to you Karin Slaughter to read you from her book.