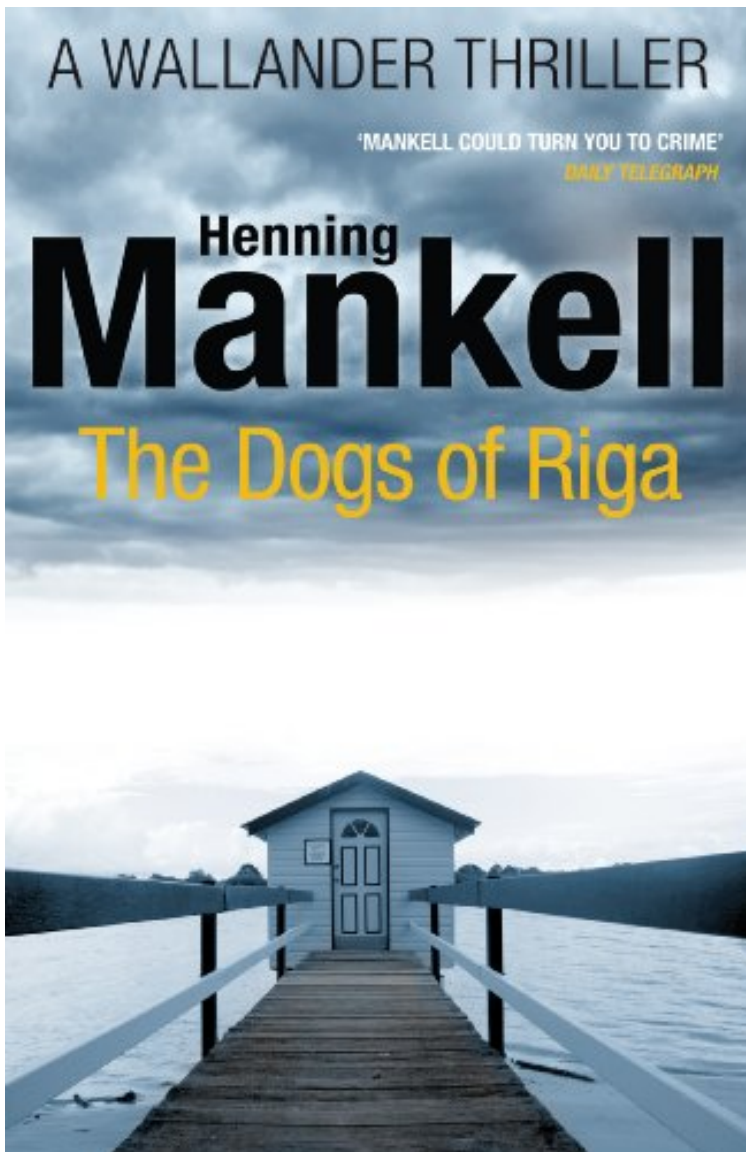


[Download pdf] File size: 51.Mb

The Dogs of Riga: Kurt Wallander



Par Henning Mankell
**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #60605 dans eBooksPubli le: 2008-09-04Sorti le: 2008-09-04Format: Ebook Kindle

[Download pdf] The Dogs of Riga: Kurt Wallander

Par Henning Mankell : The Dogs of Riga: Kurt Wallander before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dogs of Riga: Kurt Wallander:

Download

Read Online

Description : Description du produitBringing the acclaimed series to a close, *The Dogs of Riga* takes Inspector Kurt Wallander across the Baltic to a disintegrating soviet union February, 1991. A life raft washes ashore in Skne carrying two dead men in expensive suits, shot gangland-style. Inspector Kurt Wallander and his team determine that the men were Eastern European criminals. But what appears in Sweden to be an open-and-shut case soon plunges Wallander into an alien world of police surveillance, thinly veiled threats, and life-endangering lies. When another murder is committed, Wallander must travel to Riga, Latvia, at the peak of the massive social and political upheaval that preceded the nation's independence from the Soviet Union. Struggling to catch up with the culprits he pursues in this shadowy nation, Wallander finds that he must make a choice, decide who is lying and who is telling the truth, and test his bravery.

Prsentation de l'diteurSweden, winter, 1991. Inspector Kurt Wallander and his team receive an anonymous tip-off. A few days later a life raft is washed up on a beach. In it are two men, dressed in expensive suits, shot dead.The dead men were criminals, victims of what seems to have been a gangland hit. But what appears to be an open-and-shut case soon takes on a far more sinister aspect. Wallander travels across the Baltic Sea, to Riga in Latvia, where he is plunged into a frozen, alien world of police surveillance, scarcely veiled threats, and lies. Doomed always to be one step behind the shadowy figures he pursues, only Wallander's obstinate desire to see that justice is done brings the truth to light.ExtraitCHAPTER 1It started snowing shortly after 10 a.m.The man in the wheelhouse of the fishing boat cursed. He'd heard the forecast, but hoped they might make the Swedish coast before the storm hit. If he hadn't been held up at Hiddensee the night before, he'd have been within sight of Ystad by now and could have changed course a few degrees eastwards. As it was, there were still seven nautical miles to go and if the snow started coming down heavily, he'd be forced to heave to and wait until visibility improved.He cursed again. It doesn't pay to be mean, he thought. I should have done what I'd meant to do last autumn, and bought a new radar. My old Decca can't be relied on any more. I should have got one of those new American models, but I was too mean. I didn't trust the East Germans, either. Didn't trust them not to cheat me.He found it hard to grasp that there was no longer a country called East Germany, that a whole nation state had ceased to exist. History had tidied up its old borders overnight. Now there was just Germany, and nobody really knew what was going to happen when the two formerly separate peoples tried to work together. At first, when the Berlin wall came down, he had felt uneasy. Would the enormous changes mean the carpet would be pulled from under his feet? His East German partners had reassured him. Nothing would change in the foreseeable future. Indeed, this upheaval might even create new opportunities.The snow was falling more heavily and the wind was veering towards the south-west. He lit a cigarette and poured coffee into the mug in the special holder next to the compass. The heat in the wheelhouse was making him sweat, and the smell of diesel oil was getting up his nose. He glanced towards the engine room. He could see one of Jakobson's feet on the narrow bunk down there, his big toe sticking out through a hole in his sock. Might as well let him sleep on, he thought. If we have to heave to, he can take over the watch while I get a few hours' rest. He took a sip of the lukewarm coffee, and thought again of what had happened the night before.He'd been forced to wait in the dilapidated little harbour to the west of Hiddensee for over five hours before the lorry appeared, rattling through the darkness to collect the goods. Weber had insisted that the delay was due to his lorry breaking down, and that could well have been true. The lorry was an ancient, rebuilt Russian military vehicle, and the man had often been astonished that it was still running. There again, he didn't trust Weber. Weber had never cheated him, but he'd made up his mind once and for all that he was not to be trusted. It was a precautionary measure. After all, the stuff he took to the East Germans was worth a lot. Each time, he took 20 or 30 computers, about 100 mobile phones and just as many car stereos--goods worth millions of kronor. If he got caught, he wouldn't be able to talk his way out of a long prison sentence. Nor would he be able to count on an ounce of help from Weber. In the world he lived in, everybody thought only about number one.He checked the course on the compass, and adjusted it by two degrees to the north. The log indicated that he was holding to a steady eight knots. There were six and a half nautical miles to go before he would see the coast and turn towards Brantevik. The greyish-blue waves were still visible ahead, but the snow seemed to be getting heavier.Five more trips, he thought, and that's it. I'll have made all the money I need and I'll be able to make my move. He lit another cigarette, smiling at the prospect. He would put all this behind him and set off on the journey to Porto Santos, where he'd open a bar. Soon, he'd no longer need to stand on watch in the leaky, draughty wheelhouse while Jakobson snored on his bunk down in the engine room. He couldn't be sure what his new life would hold, but he longed for it even so.Abruptly as it had started, it stopped snowing. At first he didn't dare to believe his luck, but then it became clear that snowflakes were no longer swirling past his eyes. I might be able to make it after all, he thought. Maybe the storm is passing and heading towards Denmark?Whistling, he poured himself some more coffee. The bag containing the money was hanging on the wall. Another 30,000 kronor closer to Porto Santos, the little island just off Madeira. Paradise was waiting.He was just about to take another sip of coffee when he caught sight of the dinghy. If the weather hadn't lifted, he'd never have noticed it. There it was, though, bobbing up and down on the waves, just 50 metres to port. A red rubber life-raft. He wiped the condensation off the glass and peered out at the dinghy. It's empty, he thought. It's fallen off a ship. He turned the wheel and slowed right down. Jakobson, woken by the change in speed, stuck his unshaven face up into the wheelhouse."Are we there?" he asked."There's a life-raft to port," said the man at the wheel, whose name was Holmgren. "We'll have it. It's worth a thousand or

two. Take the wheel and I'll get the boat-hook. Jakobson moved over to the wheel while Holmgren pulled the flaps of his cap down over his ears and left the wheelhouse. The wind bit into his face and he clung to the rail. The dinghy came slowly nearer. He started to unfasten the boat-hook that was attached to the side of the wheelhouse. His fingers froze as he struggled with the catches, but eventually he released it and turned back to the water. He gave a start. The dinghy was only a few metres away from the boat's hull, and he realised his mistake. There were two people inside. Dead people. Jakobson shouted something unintelligible from the wheelhouse: he too had seen what was in the life-raft. It wasn't the first time Holmgren had seen dead bodies. As a young man doing his military service, a gun had exploded on a manoeuvre, and four of his friends had been blown to bits. Later, during his many years as a professional fisherman, he had seen bodies washed up on beaches or floating in the water. It struck Holmgren immediately that they were oddly dressed. The two men weren't fishermen or sailors--they were wearing suits. And they were hugging, as if they'd been trying to protect each other from the inevitable. He tried to imagine what had happened. Who could they be? Jakobson emerged from the wheelhouse and stood by his side. "Oh, shit!" he said. "Oh, shit! What are we going to do?" Holmgren thought for a moment. "Nothing," he said. "If we take them on board we'll only end up with difficult questions to answer. We haven't seen them, simple as that. It is snowing, after all." "Shall we just let 'em drift?" Jakobson asked. "Yes," Holmgren answered. "They're dead after all. There's nothing we can do. Besides, I don't want to have to explain where this boat has come from. Do you?" Jakobson shook his head doubtfully. They stared at the two dead men in silence. Holmgren thought they looked young, hardly more than 30. Their faces were stiff and white. Holmgren shivered. "Odd that there's no name on the life-raft," Jakobson said. "What ship can it have come from?" Holmgren took the boat-hook and moved the dinghy round, looking at its sides. Jakobson was right: there was no name. "What the hell can have happened?" he muttered. "Who are they? How long have they been adrift, wearing suits and ties?" "How far is it to Ystad?" asked Jakobson. "Just over six nautical miles." "We could tow them a bit nearer the coast," said Jakobson, "so that they can drift ashore where they'll be found." Holmgren thought again, weighing up the pros and cons. The idea of leaving them there was repugnant, he couldn't deny that. At the same time, towing the dinghy would be risky--they might be seen by a ferry or some other vessel. He made up his mind quickly. He unfastened a painter, leant over the rail and tied it to the life-raft. Jakobson changed course for Ystad, and Holmgren secured the line when the dinghy was about ten metres behind the boat and free of its wake. When the Swedish coast came into sight, Holmgren cut the rope and the life-raft with the two dead men inside disappeared far behind. Jakobson changed course to the east, and a few hours later they chugged into the harbour at Brantevik. Jakobson collected his pay, got into his Volvo and drove off towards Svarte. The harbour was deserted. Holmgren locked the wheelhouse and spread a tarpaulin over the cargo hatch. He checked the hawsers slowly and methodically. Then he picked up the bag containing the money, walked over to his old Ford, and coaxed the reluctant engine to life. Ordinarily he would have allowed himself to dream of Porto Santos, but today all he could picture in his mind's eye was the red life-raft. He tried to work out where it would eventually be washed up. The currents in that area were erratic, the wind gusted and shifted direction constantly. The dinghy could wash up anywhere along the coast. Even so, he guessed that it would be somewhere not far from Ystad, if it hadn't already been spotted by someone on one of the ferries to or from Poland. It was already starting to get dark as he drove into Ystad. Two men wearing suits, he thought, as he stopped at a red light. In a life-raft. There was something that didn't add up. Something he'd seen without quite registering it. Just as the lights changed to green, he realised what it was. The two men weren't in the dinghy as a result of a ship going down. He couldn't prove it, but he was certain. The two men were already dead when they'd been placed in the dinghy. On the spur of the moment, he turned right and stopped at one of the phone boxes opposite the bookshop in the square. He rehearsed what he was going to say carefully. Then he dialled 999 and asked for the police. As he waited for them to answer, he watched the snow begin to fall again through the dirty glass of the phone box. It was February 12, 1991. CHAPTER 2 Inspector Kurt Wallander sat in his office at the police station in Ystad and yawned. It was such a huge yawn that one of the muscles under his chin locked. The pain was excruciating. Wallander punched at the underside of his jaw with his right hand to free the muscle. Just as he was doing so, Martinsson, one of the younger officers, walked in. He paused in the doorway, puzzled. Wallander continued to massage his jaw until the pain subsided. Martinsson turned to leave. "Come on in," Wallander said. "Haven't you ever yawned so wide that your jaw muscles locked?" Martinsson shook his head. "No," he said. "I must admit I wondered what you were doing." "Now you know," Wallander said. "What do you want?" Martinsson made a face and sat down. He had a notebook in his hand. "We received a strange phone

call a few minutes ago," he said. "I thought I'd better check it with you." "We get strange phone calls every day," Wallander said, wondering why he was being consulted. "I don't know what to think," Martinsson said. "Some man called from a phone box. He claimed that a rubber life-raft containing two dead bodies would be washed up near here. He hung up without giving his name, or saying who'd been killed or why." Wallander looked at him in surprise. "Is that all?" he asked. "Who took the call?" "I did," Martinsson said. "He said exactly what I've just told you. Somehow or other, he sounded convincing." "Convincing?" "You get to know after a while," Martinsson replied hesitantly. "Sometimes you can hear straight away that it's a hoax. This time whoever rang seemed very definite." "Two dead men in a rubber life-raft that's going to be washed up on the coast near here?" Martinsson nodded. Wallander stifled another yawn and leaned back in his chair. "Have we had any reports about a boat sinking or anything like that?" he asked. "None at all," Martinsson replied. "Inform all the other police districts along the coast," Wallander said. "Talk to the coastguards. But we can't start a search based on nothing more than an anonymous telephone call. We'll just have to wait and see what happens." Martinsson nodded and stood up. "I agree," he said. "We'll have to wait and see." "It could get pretty hellish tonight," Wallander said, nodding towards the window. "Snow." "I'm going home now anyway," Martinsson said, looking at his watch. "Snow or no snow." Martinsson left, and Wallander stretched out in his chair. He could feel how tired he was. He'd been forced to answer emergency calls two nights in a row. The first night he'd led the hunt for a suspected rapist who'd barricaded himself in an empty summer cottage at Sandskogen. The man was drugged to the eyeballs and there was reason to think he could be armed, so they'd surrounded the place until 5 a.m., when he'd given himself up. The following night Wallander had been called out to a murder in the town centre. A birthday party had got out of hand, and the man whose birthday it was had been stabbed in the temple with a carving knife. He got up from his chair and put on his fleece jacket. I've got to get some sleep, he thought. Somebody else can look after the snowstorm. When he left the station, the gusts of wind forced him to bend double. He unlocked his Peugeot and scrambled in. The snow that had settled on the windows gave him the feeling of being in a warm, cosy room. He started the engine, inserted a tape, and closed his eyes. Immediately his thoughts turned to Rydberg. It was less than a month since his old friend and colleague had died of cancer. Wallander had known about the illness the year before, when they were struggling together to solve the murder of an old couple at Lenarp. During the last months of his life, when it was obvious to everybody and not least to Rydberg himself that the end was nigh, Wallander had tried to imagine going to the station knowing that Rydberg wouldn't be there. How would he manage without the advice and judgement of old Rydberg, who had so much experience? It was still too soon to answer that question. He hadn't had any difficult cases since Rydberg had gone on sick leave for the last time, and then passed away. But the sense of pain and loss was still very real. From Publishers Weekly Set against the chaotic backdrop of eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Mankell's intense, accomplished mystery, the last in his Kurt Wallander series (*Firewall*, etc.), explores one man's struggle to find truth and justice in a society increasingly bereft of either. Here the provincial Swedish detective takes on a probably fruitless task: investigating the murders of two unidentified men washed up on the Swedish coast in an inflatable dinghy. The only clues: their dental work suggests they're from an Eastern Bloc country; the raft is Yugoslavian. But their deaths mushroom into an international incident that takes Wallander to Riga, Latvia, and enmeshes him in an incredibly dangerous and emotionally draining situation, battling forces far larger than the "bloodless burglaries and frauds" he typically pursues in Sweden. In Riga, Wallander must deal with widespread governmental corruption, which opens his eyes to the chilling reality of life in the totalitarian Eastern Bloc: grim, harrowing and volatile. Wallander's introspection and self-doubt make him compellingly real, and his efforts to find out what happened to those men on the life raft makes for riveting reading. There's a pervasive sense of Scandinavian gloom, in Wallander and in the novel, that might be difficult for some American readers, but this is a very worthy book—a unique combination of police procedural and spy thriller that also happens to be a devastating critique of Soviet-style Communism. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.