

Entanglement

Zygmunt Miloszewski

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The best crime stories are those in which everyone is flawed, both the good guys and the bad guys, the dead and the living. The good guys populating *Entanglement* are weak, guilty, and rude—human. Which makes them all the more attractive to readers. In this, his third novel, Zygmunt Miloszewski writes not only about the mystery inherent in any crime but about the mysteries of the human psyche—why we love who we love, why we hurt who we hurt, the limits of pleasure and pain.

Teodor Szacki is hoping for a quiet morning at home in Warsaw with his family when the phone rings to call him out to a crime scene. A man has been found with a skewer through his eye after an intense therapy session shared with four other people—the obvious suspects. Over the next few weeks Prosecutor Szacki finds himself baffled by every new piece of information, none of which provides the key to the case. Finally he follows his instincts and discovers he's scratched the tip of an iceberg of historical proportions and inadvertently invited the threat onto his own family.

To make matters worse, he's distracted by a lovely journalist who seems to be the antidote to the tired, overly-familiar groove he's fallen into with his wife and daughter. Miloszewski writes, "Everything in his life had already happened. He would never be young again, he would never fall in love with the feelings of a twenty-year-old, he'd never be so deeply in love that nothing else mattered." Monika is young, independent, and willing. A potential affair plus a tough case drive Szacki to override his daily three-cigarette limit.

Miloszewski, a reporter and editor for *Newsweek*, writes with elegance and a subtle touch, even when describing the grisly scene of the murder or the viscous sound of an autopsy. His plot is clever without being tiresome, and he makes great use of intersecting threads of history, politics, and psychology. The characters are fully fleshed and recognizable as people you might meet on the street; even the very minor characters like the odd family Szacki meets in an elevator are detailed enough to resonate long after they've made their exit. The character of Prosecutor Szacki has enough charisma and complexity to give competition to the likes of Mikael Blomkvist and Rob Ryan. Hopefully this is the first of many mystery novels from Miloszewski.

ANDI DIEHN (September / October 2010)

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