



The Defenceless

Kati Hiekkapelto

David Hackston, Translator

Orenda Books (Dec 1, 2015)

Softcover \$14.95 (320pp)

978-1-910633-13-7

Denied asylum in Finland after fleeing certain death at the hands of radical Islamists in Pakistan, young Sammy goes underground and lives on the streets, hoping for a chance at a new life. The second of bestselling author Kati Hiekkapelto's series of crime stories (the first was *The Hummingbird*) follows police officer Anna Fekete as she attempts to unravel the web of drugs, crime, and murder that has entangled Sammy as competing gangs vie to become lords of the drug trade in Finland.

Set in the darkly brooding Nordic landscape, the tightly woven, fast-paced tale is much more than a gripping crime story—Hiekkapelto's deft hand also blends social commentary, the plight of stateless refugees, insight into the minds and motives of drug addicts, and the inner workings of crime investigation into the mix. She caps it all off with an adrenalin-fueled quest to bring the guilty to justice.

Her complex, troubled characters—on both sides of the law and in that ambiguous space between—are drawn with delicacy and skill, and the relationships between them dance between tension and understanding. The dialogue is pointed and powerful and the scene shifts are unfailingly smooth and natural. With *The Defenceless*, this masterful storyteller has brewed up a savory tale of crime and police methodology that, seasoned with friendship, compassion, and hope, satisfies on all levels.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Summer 2016)

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