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Rain Girl (Franza Oberwieser Book 1)



Synopsis

Veteran homicide detective Franza Oberwieser prefers her job in the winter. Summer is for growing, not for dying. So when the body of a beautiful young woman is found on the autobahn, dressed in a glittering party dress and bathed in June rain, Franza is determined to give her justice. Revealing victims' hidden lives is part of the job, but as Franza and her partner, Felix, peel back the layers shrouding the girl's disturbing past, darker mysteries emerge. Everyone has something to hide—even Franza, who must face her own secrets to reveal the truth.

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Customer Reviews

The story takes place outside Munich, Germany near the Danube and along the autobahn. A young girl is hit by a car, in the rain in the middle of the night. What was she doing on the autobahn in a glittering dress in the middle of the night? No one else was around! Her death and her identity seem to affect the lives of many of the characters. The heroine is a middle age female police homicide detective. There is much ado about her personal life as well as her obsession on solving the mystery surrounding the death of the young girl. There are many colorful, not always likable, characters to keep track of. Infidelity runs amuck. The story jumps around from place to place and

character to character. I found it to be a bit disconnected with an okay plot but a bit complicated at times. I would describe this book as being slightly suspenseful, but definitely not a thriller. I found it a bit boring at times and I trudged through parts of it because I wanted to know what happened to the detective's elusive son, Ben. The story starts off with lots of descriptive imagery and page turning scenes; however, I found the ending to be a bit incomplete.

I picked up this month's kindle first during a long sleepless night. I've never read the work of an Austrian writer and thought a simple mystery would be a nice change from an orgy of science fiction reading. "Rain Girl" turned out to be an excellent choice. Kreslehner has created a simple mystery told largely in a series of short vignettes. Many of the "chapters" are actually only a paragraph long. This style combined with Kreslehner's extremely descriptive prose has the effect of flipping through a stack of photos or viewing film clips rather than reading a novel. It was a bit of an adjustment though not unpleasant. The story did begin to have more traditional continuity later in the book which helped to connect with the characters though most never felt completely developed. Over all, "Rain Girl" was a simple, easy read. The mystery isn't particularly complex (the red herring is fairly apparent as that and I thought the killer was easy to spot) but it follows a coherent investigation touching on many grim topics without ever becoming excessively visceral or unpleasant. However, there is an abundance of coarse language and marital infidelity which some readers may find to be too much. Other than references to the Autobahn, Danube and some distinctly Austrian names, the fact that this was a translation was easy to forget (Bravo, Mr. Chadeayne) I think I might like a sequel to this more than "Rain Girl" itself. This was a good introduction to some interesting characters. Edited 7-5. A customer indicated that they misread a phrase in original review as a spoiler. On the theory that if one person could so could another, a slight change in wording has been made. Thanks for pointing that out, Kevin.

I enjoyed this book immensely. I thought there was as much "between the lines" as there was in the actual written story. Homicide Detectives that were not affected by their job would not be believable...even a 'tough as nails' detective like Franza. There were the 'mini vacations' she took in her mind's eye that kept the harsh stuff from seeping into her skin. I found that interesting. The 'flashbacks' in italics, were contacts with the dead girl (minus names and traits) and were the reader's clues to help solve the mystery before Franza and Felix did, . The twists and turns were introduced with subtlety, almost as an afterthought, allowing the reader to interpret and 'connect the dots' without the story being completely spelled out. The reader had the opportunity to agree or

disagree based on the flashback 'asides'. I feel that the story was genuinely well written (and translated), and I have already recommended the book to friends.

An excellent translation, leaving the feel of the German language, as the reader traverses the German landscape. The tale itself offers a largely unpredictable route to the final solution. The main characters are interesting and, I think, believable, but I never did get to where I cared what really happens to any of them. But, then, I did enjoy the well-told story.

The crime under investigation is only half of the story. As the investigation develops, the inner pathos of the female detective reveals itself in emotional reverberations from gradual uncovering of the tragic circumstances leading up to the murder. The real pleasure for the reader is in the strength and simplicity of the language, its use of repetition and theme to render a mood.

I couldn't like Franza, the main character, and the dialog between characters was often abrupt and didn't make a lot of sense. It seemed like every character in the book was socially awkward and less than honest (dark and shady), and I often found myself wondering "who speaks like this?" I wanted to attribute the strange dialog to the fact that this book was translated to English, but even so it didn't make it easier to read. The book seemed to take forever to get through and had me dreading picking it back up at times. Not a normal thing for me, as I often will pull an all-nighter to finish a good book. I powered through this one anyway, even though by the story's end I really didn't care who killed Marie or what the motive was. I was hoping a riveting ending would make it worthwhile. Unfortunately this was not the case.

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