



**Title:** Helsinki White

**Author:** James Thompson

**Description:**

Two days after their daughter is born, Kari Vaara drops a bombshell on his American wife, Kate: He has a brain tumor ... and hes been handpicked to run a rogue black-ops unit, using crime to fight crime.

After recovering from surgery, he gets to work. The black-ops unit is small, and reports directly to Finlands National Chief of Police. They have secrecy, autonomy, and the cash to buy all the high-tech gear. Soon the unit is cleaning house, robbing Helsinkis mobsters blind of their cash, dope, and illegal firearms. But Karis team is too good, and their actions have unintended consequences...

Meanwhile, Finland roils with hatred as its most extreme right political party gains popularity despite no agenda besides xenophobia. When the countrys leading immigrants rights advocate is assassinated and her head sent by mail to the Finnish Somalia Network, the president assigns Kari to the murder. Cracking this case will involve the unsolved kidnapping of a billionaires children, a Faustian bargain with a former French legionnaireand Kate.

**Reviews**

**Booklist (starred review):**

This was one of the first Scandinavian crime novels to be published after Norwegian Anders Breivik's shooting spree at a youth camp in 2011, which resulted in 69 deaths, and in that context, the novel's themes of hate, racism, and politics ring especially true.

A must-read for fans of Stieg Larsson and Henning Mankell.

**New York Post:**

In his dozen years of living in Finland, Kentucky born-and-bred Thompson has absorbed enough cold, dark atmosphere for a spot on the roster of top Nordic crime writers -- Mankell, Nesbø, Indriðason and the like.

**Portsmouth Herald:**

An American expat who makes his home in Finland, Thompson combines a visceral American sensibility with the traditional melancholy distance of the Scandinavian thriller. Vaara's narration is lean, reserved and heartfelt. He's a likeable, flawed character who

feels more than he's able to express, and Thompson brings him readily to life.

***Publishers Weekly:***

Racial hatred drives Thompson's explosive third thriller featuring Insp. Kari Vaara. Thompson deftly explores moral gray areas in this all too topical novel.

***Library Journal:***

In his third Vaara thriller, Thompson adeptly conveys the ugliness of the racial intolerance currently permeating Western Europe.

***USA Today:***

*Helsinki White* continues the investigations of Inspector Kari Vaara. In this new novel, which follows on the heels of last year's *Lucifer's Tears*, Vaara is chosen to run a rogue black-ops unit that reports to Finland's national chief of police. When an immigrants' rights advocate is assassinated, Vaara must hunt her killer.

***Kirkus Reviews:***

Enough violent felonies for a Sunday newspaper -- and, as a depressingly informative epilogue intimates, that's exactly where they've come from.

***Elizabeth A. White, syndicated columnist:***

Thompson's writing remains as razor sharp and exquisitely evocative as readers have come to expect and appreciate. He also continues to demonstrate that he is without peer when it comes to combining intense and engaging storytelling with intelligent and provocative commentary about extremely serious societal issues. And while it's both entertaining and enlightening, *Helsinki White* is not a passive reading experience. Readers better come ready to engage in critical examination of not just the story, but their own beliefs and ideals as well. Kari Vaara and James Thompson both demand nothing less.

***Nordic Bookblog:***

The plot is rich and interesting, and Thompson's writing is outstanding.